DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 322 394 CE 055 588

AUTHOR Jennings, Bernard
TITLE The Education of Adults in Britain: A Study of Organisation, Finance and Policy. Newland Papers Number Ten.
INSTITUTION Hull Univ. (England). Dept. of Adult and Continuing Education.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-85958-041-5
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 130p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Education; Apprenticeships; *Distance Education; Educational Administration; *Educational Finance; Educational History; Educational Policy; Educational Theories; Foreign Countries; *Government School Relationship; *Labor Education; Labor Force Development; *Nonformal Education; School Districts; Theory Practice Relationship; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Great Britain; Open University (Great Britain)

ABSTRACT

This report updates a 1981 paper on adult education in Britain that was part of a series published by the European Centre for Leisure and Education. It includes five chapters. Chapter 1 provides statistics on the population and labor force of Britain and describes its education and government systems. Chapter 2 provides a brief description of the structure and financing of adult education. Chapter 3 describes the evolution of the theory and practice of adult education in Britain. Chapter 4 describes programs and policies, including how national policies are determined. It describes the Local Educational Authority (LEA) vocational sector, occupational training and the Manpower Services Commission, the LEA nonvocational sector, adult basic education, the Workers' Educational Association, long-term residential colleges, the universities, trade union education, the open university, the informal voluntary sector, the private sector, broadcasting, other agencies of adult education, and the auxiliaries of adult education. Chapter 5 presents conclusions on the plurality of adult education in Britain. Each chapter includes references. (CML)

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The University of Hull
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THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS IN BRITAIN:
A STUDY OF ORGANISATION, FINANCE AND POLICY

Bernard Jennings

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Number Ten

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Newland Paper
Number Ten

C Bernard Jennings 1985

ISBN 0-85958-041-5

NEWLAND PAPERS

This is the tenth paper in a series designed primarily to publish the work of members of staff and research students of the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Hull. "Newland" is the name of the district in which the University is situated. The paper has been typed and prepared in the Department, and printed in the University. Mr. Gary Sargeant designed the cover.

THE AUTHOR

Bernard Jennings has been Professor of Adult Education in the University of Hull since 1974. He is currently National President of the Workers' Educational Association, and Chairman of the Publications Sub-Committee of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.

————————ooOoo————————

PREFACE

The first edition of this work appeared in 1981 in two formats, as Volume 9, **The United Kingdom**, of Studies and Documents on Adult Education in Europe, published by the European Centre for Leisure and Education, Prague; and as Newland Paper No. 3, **Adult Education in Britain: Its Organisation and Structure**, published by the University of Hull. The E.C.L.E. book is one of a series of national descriptions of adult education systems produced as part of a research project, supported by U.N.E.S.C.O. and the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, on the comparative study of the organisation and structure of adult education in Europe.

The present Newland Paper is virtually a new work, except for Chapters III and V. The treatment of finance and policy has been greatly extended, and in addition to the updating of statistics and other factual information, major revisions have been required by the considerable changes which have taken place in the context and content of adult and post-secondary education since 1981. The work has therefore been given a new title.

I would like to acknowledge the generous assistance received in the preparation of the 1981 and 1985 editions from Dr. Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, Director of the Department of Adult and Continuing Education in the University of Hull, and other colleagues in the Department, especially Dr. Geoffrey Squires and Mrs. Molly Parkin; from Arthur Stock, Director of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, and many friends involved in the affairs of N.I.A.C.E.; from my colleagues in the E.C.L.E. project, especially Dr. Premysl Maydl, Director of E.C.L.E., and the delegates to project conferences held in different parts of Europe between 1978 and 1985; from my associates in the Workers' Educational Association and the Open University; from colleagues in adult and further education in Humberside; from my research students, especially Dr. Mary Casling; and from two retired H.M.I.s, Konrad Elsdon and Harold Marks. The responsibility for the opinions expressed and the interpretations offered in this work is, of course, mine.

I hope that this Newland Paper will be of use to postgraduate students of Adult and Continuing Education, and of interest to practioners in the field. I would be grateful for any corrections and critical observations which would be helpful in any subsequent revision of this work.

Bernard Jennings
University of Hull
June 1985

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The "Britain" of this book is, strictly speaking, the United Kingdom of Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom is not a federation. With the Government of Northern Ireland, which previously had extensive devolved powers, at present in suspense, all legislative and executive authority rests with the parliament and government of the United Kingdom. Scotland and Northern Ireland, however, have separate, and in many ways distinctive, educational systems.

In 1982 the estimated populations of the four countries were (in millions): England 46.8, Wales 2.8, Scotland 5.2, Northern Ireland 1.6, total 55.9 - 27.2 male, 28.7 female.(1) 10,367,000 children (including 546,000 under five years of age) were attending school. 612,000 (5.9%) were pupils at assisted and independent (i.e. fee-paying) schools. Within the public sector, 22% of pupils were attending voluntary schools, nearly all of which are denominational, mainly Church of England and Roman Catholic. The school population fell by almost a million between 1976 and 1982, as a result of a decline in the birth rate. In the period 1961-71, the average annual figure of live births was 962,000. This fell to 655,000 in 1976-77, recovering to 743,000 in 1979-80 and 720,000 in 1981-82.

The ages of compulsory schooling are 5-16, with voluntary attendance to the age of 18. During recent years a system of selective secondary education has gradually been replaced by comprehensive schools. These are now attended by about 83% of English secondary school children within the public education system, and by over 96% of the corresponding groups in Wales and Scotland. Most children transfer from primary to secondary schools at the age of 11, but a three-stage system, 5-9, 9-13, 13-16/18, is also in use.

The average household in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) had 3.09 members in 1961 but only 2.64 in 1982. The percentage of one person households increased during the same period from 12 to 23. There has been a marked fall in recent years in the percentage of married couples with more than two children. Families are being completed earlier, giving married couples a longer span of life after their children have left home. The incidence of divorce is increasing and it is estimated that one third of marriages currently being contracted will end in divorce. In 1981 34% of all marriages involved a remarriage of one or both partners (15% in 1961) and in 90% of these cases one partner had been divorced.

It is estimated that the labour force in the United Kingdom increased by 2.5 millions between 1961 and 1981, due entirely to an increase of about 70% in the number of married women at work, especially married women working part-time. In 1978 64% of children aged 10-15 had mothers who went out to work, nearly two-thirds of them part-time. Between 1961 and 1978 the rise in the number of working women was offset by an increase in unemployment, leaving the active labour force relatively stable. In the same period there was a marked shift from private to public employment, a trend which has accelerated in relative, although not absolute, terms since 1979, when unemployment began to rise steeply.

Labour Force (United Kingdom)	1961	1978	1979	1982
Employed (millions)				
Central government	1.8	2.3	2.3	2.3
Local government	1.9	3.0	3.1	2.9
Public corporations	2.2	2.0	2.1	1.8
Private sector - employees ..	16.9	15.6)		
Private sector - employers		)	17.9	16.5
and self-employed	1.7	1.9)		
Total employed	24.5	24.8	25.3	23.5
			(including 9.5	females)

In 1961 unemployment was 347,000 (1.6% of the total labour force, which means employed plus unemployed). This figure had risen to 1,475,000 (6.2%) by 1978, and nearly 1,900,000 (7.8%) by July 1980. More recent comparisons are made difficult by changes made in October 1982 and April 1983 in the methods of calculating the official unemployment figures, which removed from the figures nearly a quarter of a million people who were out of employment. Projecting the present method of calculation backwards produces the following figures for unemployment:

1961	292,000	- 1.3%
1979	1,296,000	- 5.3%
1980	1,665,000	- 6.8%
1981	2,520,000	- 10.5%
Year to 30.6.1984	3,101,000	- 12.9%

In April 1984 44% of unemployed males had been out of work for at least a year, and 25% for two years or more. There are considerable regional variations in the pattern of unemployment. In 1983 the rate in the south-east of England was 9.3%, and the average for England was 12.3%. In Wales 15.9% of the labour force was unemployed, and the highest regional rate was found in Northern Ireland, 20.2%.

In 1982-83 the Youth Opportunities Programme of the Manpower Services Commission helped 543,000 young people, 92% of them aged 16-17, by providing work experience and practical training. In 1983-84 Y.O.P. and the Youth Training Scheme (mainly the latter) provided a similar service to 381,000 school leavers. As a result of all the government's special employment/training measures, an estimated 440,000 people in July 1984 were in employment, training or early retirement who would otherwise have been claiming unemployment benefit.

The effects of the recession and structural changes in the economy upon employment can be shown by aggregating the following figures for July 1984:

(a) Official unemployment figure		3,101,000
(b) Estimated effect of changes in the definition of unemployment		250,000
(c) Estimated effect of government schemes		440,000
Total	about	3,800,000

The rate of growth of unemployment has slowed down since mid-1983, averaging 10-15,000 a month in the year 1983-84, compared with 29,000 a month in the second half of 1982, but at the time of writing the total is still rising.

Trade union membership increased from 9,535,000 in 1961 to 13,300,000 (12,200,000 affiliated to the Trades Union Congress) in 1979. As a result primarily of rising employment, these figures are now about 11,000,000 and 10,000,000.

The proportion of elderly people in the population is rising. Although the rate of increase in the number of people of state-pensionable age (65 years for men, 60 for women) is slackening, the percentage of people over the ages of 75 and 85 respectively is set to rise considerably. Gerontologists distinguish between the "young old" (up to 75) and the "old old" (over 75), on the grounds that people experience on average much greater health problems and require much greater and more expensive care, after the age of 75.

	1951	1980	Projected 1996
People over retiring age (65 men, 60 women) (millions)	6.66 13.6% of population	9.7-17.4%	10.3-17.9%
People over 75	1.73 3.5%	3.1- 5.6%	4.00-7.2%

The expectation of life at birth in 1976 was 69.7 years for men and 75.8 for women. In 1901 the figures were 48.1 and 51.8. In 1981 over 55% of women aged over 65 who had married were widows. The numbers of over-85s increased from about 300,000 in 1961 to about 500,000 in 1980, and are expected to reach one million by 1996. 70% of these will be women, a substantial proportion of them widows, and the cost per head of health and social care will be considerable.

About 60% of households in Great Britain in 1982 were owner-occupiers; 29% were tenants of local authorities; 11% rented houses or flats from private landlords. The corresponding figures for 1978 were 53 - 34 - 13. In 1982, 60% of households had central heating, compared with about a third in 1971. Extended holidays provide another sign of rising living standards during the last two decades. In 1961 nearly all manual workers were entitled to two weeks paid holiday. Now 99% have at least three weeks, and the average is about four. As a result of this trend and rising incomes the number of

people going away on holiday rose from 27 millions in 1961 (2 millions abroad) to 39 millions in 1973 (9 millions abroad). In 1983, 34 million people took holidays in Britain and nearly 15 millions went abroad.

By the standards of the advanced industrial countries Britain has a low gross domestic product per head, and her relative position has been declining. Some comparisons for 1977 are (Britain = 100): U.S.A. 164.5, Federal Republic of Germany 129.1, France 123.5, Italy 78.7, Ireland 67.9. (These figures make no allowance for the goods and services provided through "black economies".)

The pattern of ownership of consumer durables, with some comparative figures for 1978, is as follows (percentage of households possessing the things listed):

		Car	Refri-gerator	Washing Machine	Dish-washer
1978:	France	67	82	76	16
	German Federal Republic	63	97	88	16
	Ireland	65	81	64	7
	Italy	70	88	87	17
	Britain	54	87	72	4
1983:	Britain	59	94	80	5

In 1983 98% of households in Britain had a television set, 81% a colour set.

The British Parliament consists of two chambers, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The House of Lords has very limited powers. Most of its members hold hereditary peerages, but a substantial proportion of the active membership consists of life peers - in effect, appointed senators. The House of Commons has 650 members (635 at the time of the 1974 and 1979 elections) elected by single-member constituencies on a first-past-the-post system. General elections must be held not less frequently than every five years. Details of the last three elections are:

	October 1974		May 1979		June 1983	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Conservative	26	276	33	339	30.5	396
Labour	28.5	319	27.7	267	19.8	209
Liberal	13.3	13	10.4	11	9.8)	17)
Social Democratic Party (formed March 1981)	-	-	-	-	)18.2 8.4)	)23 6)
Others (nearly all parties based in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland)	4.8	27	4.1	18	3.3	22
Non-voters	27.5	-	24.9	-	28.2	-

(1) = Percentage of electorate
(2) = M.P.s elected.

In June 1983 the Liberal and Social Democratic Parties fought the elections as the Liberal-SDP alliance, with only one of the parties nominating a candidate in each constituency. A small percentage change in voting can bring about a substantial increase or decrease in the number of M.P.s elected for the two largest parties. In May 1979, 44% of those actually voting, and 33% of the total electorate, gave the Conservatives a comfortable majority. In June 1983 their percentage of the votes cast fell to 42.4%, but they gained 61% of the seats in the House of Commons, and their overall majority went up from 44 to 143. Labour with 27.6% of the votes cast won 32% of the seats, and the Alliance with 25.4% of the votes cast secured 3.5% of the seats. Although a three-party split with each local faction winning at least a quarter of the votes cast had not been seen since 1929, the discrepancy between votes and seats is not in itself unusual. The Labour government of 1945, which had the largest House of Commons majority of any government since the war, gained its overwhelming victory with fewer than half of the votes cast, and no government since then has reached the level of 50% electoral support.

The system of local government will be described in Chapter II, but it is worth noting that local elections are in most areas contested on party lines and on national rather than local issues. The party in power nationally often fares badly in local elections. Recent results in percentage of council seats won, are (England and Wales):

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal/ Alliance	Other
Metropolitan Counties (6) & Greater London Council				
1977	61	35	3	1
1981	23	69	7	1
Other Counties (47)				
1977	68	17	2	13
1981	43	38	9	10
Metropolitan Districts (36)				
1978	48	44	5	4
1983	30	60	9	2
Other Districts (333)				
1978	47	22	4	27
1983	45	26	9	20
London Boroughs (32)				
1978	50	46	2	2
1982	51	41	6	1

The "Liberal/Alliance" figures represent Liberals only before 1981, Liberals and SDP subsequently. Most of the Alliance councillors at present are Liberals. The group "other" includes independent councillors; some associated with the Conservative Party who contest local elections under an "independent" label; and local groups with such names as Ratepayers' Associations. The numbers of independent councillors have been declining in recent years, and most of those described as "other" above have a similar outlook to, if not a formal association with, the Conservatives. In 1984, the Conservatives and

"others" controlled two-thirds of the non-metropolitan counties and three-quarters of the non-metropolitan districts. Labour controlled the Greater London Council, the six metropolitan counties, and 25 of the 36 metropolitan districts. The government has announced its intention to abolish the metropolitan counties and the G.L.C.

The first edition of this work was produced as part of the research project on the Organisation and Structure of Adult Education in Europe, directed by the European Centre for Leisure and Education, Prague. It was published in Prague as well as in Hull. The European project has made use of a tripartite division of adult education into "school forms" (organised adult education within the public education system), "out of school forms" (mainly occupationally based education and training) and non-formal education. It would not be feasible to use these categories as the main chapter headings for a description of British adult education, because of the variety and complexity of the public education sector, which includes non-governmental bodies operating with public funds and within a governmental regulatory framework. However, the detailed account of the system has been sub-divided so as to facilitate comparisons with other national systems which fit more snugly into the above tripartite division.

Adult education is here defined as educational provision for men and women who are legally adult - over the age of eighteen - and are not engaged in continuous full-time education. This definition excludes full-time students going straight from school to college or university, but includes people studying at the same institutions either full-time as mature students or part-time. The alternative definitions are **post-secondary education**, which would bring in all the young full-time students; and **post-compulsory education**, which would add the 16-18 year-olds not only in colleges of further education but also in the senior classes of the secondary schools. It is probable that in the future the proportion of mature students in universities and colleges will increase (nearly 40% of university students in the United States of America are over 25 years of age) and that the dividing line between part-time and full-time study will become less clear. At present, however, the distinction between "young full-time" and "mature and/or part-time students" is both tenable and convenient, and takes us as close as administrative realities will allow to philosophical concepts of adulthood related to autonomy, maturity and experience.

Britain has three educational systems, for Scotland, Northern Ireland and England and Wales respectively. Since 1978, when the responsibility for education in Wales was transferred from the Secretary of State for Education and Science to the Secretary of State for Wales, English and Welsh education have been separately administered, but they are still recognisably part of a single system. In the appropriate sections of this book, the main features of the adult education system of England and Wales will be described first, and then the different characteristics of Scotland and Northern Ireland will be noted. This method inevitably does less than justice to the systems of the latter countries, but may perhaps be excused both by practical necessity and by the concentration of 88% of the

population of the United Kingdom in England and Wales.

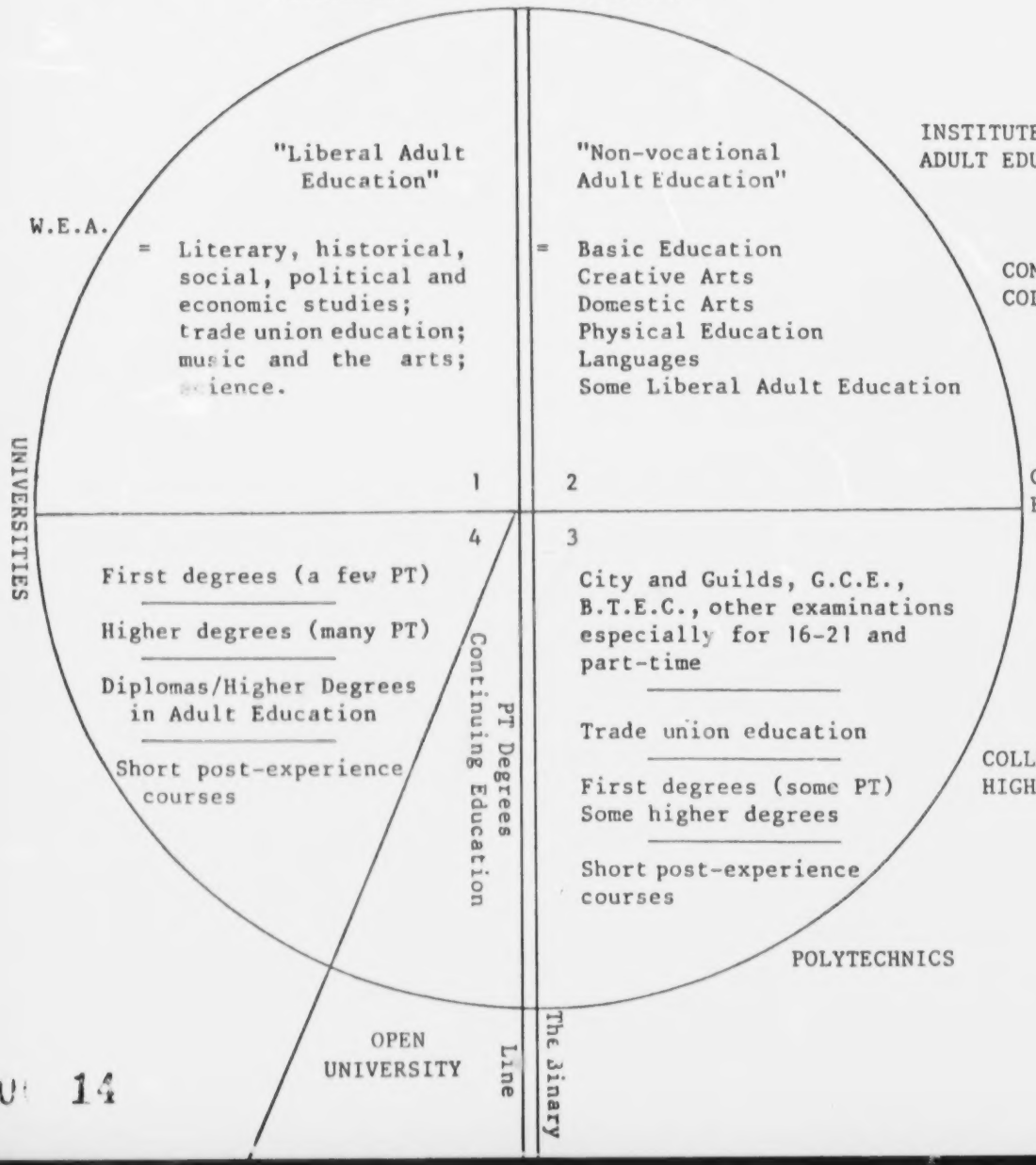
The structure of adult education in Britain - even in England and Wales - is very complex. It may be helpful, therefore, to have a brief overview of the system, provided in Chapter II, before proceeding to a detailed analysis. The system is the product of piecemeal growth over a long period of time and some of the ideas and developments of the nineteenth century are still influential today. The present pattern cannot therefore be fully understood without some account of its evolution, which Chapter III attempts to provide. The detailed consideration of programmes and policies follows in Chapter IV and the final chapter offers some thoughts on the comparative dimension.

References Chapter I

The statistical data in this chapter are derived from Central Statistical Office, **Social Trends Nos. 10-15**, H.M.S.O., 1980-85, the **Department of Employment Gazette**, and **Labour Research** Vol. 73, No. 1, Jan. 1984.

Figure 1 : The Structure of Adult Education

(Ft = Full-time; PT = Part-time)



Chapter II A Brief Description of Structure and Finance

The system of adult education in England and Wales is both decentralised and diverse. Four sectors can be identified:

1. **the public education sector**, which is made up of two partnerships, between central government and local government, and between the public authorities on the one hand, and autonomous organisations, e.g. the universities and certain voluntary bodies, on the other, with most of the provision made by Local Education Authorities;

2. **industrial training**, provided mainly by industry itself and by the Manpower Services Commission;

3. **the private sector**, most of which operates for profit but which includes some independent institutions and trusts which derive their income mainly from student fees and the sale of services, but which are non-profit-making;

4. voluntary bodies which are engaged in the education of adults, but which have wider purposes than the provision of organised adult education courses, for example, the Women's Institutes. Neither "non-formal" nor "informal" is a convenient term to describe the adult education role of these organisations, as some of their provisions, including training programmes for their own members, are no less formal in character than are courses in the first sector above. The fourth sector will be here described as "**the informal voluntary sector**", but it must be understood that this is no more than a term of art adopted for convenience in the absence of a generally accepted label.

England and Wales have basically a two-tier system of local government. The upper tier consists of county councils and the second of district councils, although the latter are often known as "cities" or "boroughs" to preserve the dignity of titles existing before local government reorganisation in 1972-74. In the "Metropolitan" areas, that is the major urban concentrations, the education authorities are the **district** councils, thirty-six in all. Outside the Metropolitan areas, the L.E.A.s are the **county** councils, thirty-nine in England, plus the Isles of Scilly, and eight in Wales.

London has a distinctive local government system. The central area, with about 2,500,000 people, is the responsibility of the Inner London Education Authority, the successor for educational purposes to the former London County Council. Twenty outer London boroughs, outside the I.L.E.A. but within the area of the Greater London Council, are separate L.E.A.s. They have a total population of over 4,500,000.

The current proposal by the government to abolish the six metropolitan county councils (Tyne and Wear, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Midlands) will not directly affect the organisation of education. It is proposed, however, that the I.L.E.A. will disappear, along with the Greater London Council in 1986. The arrangements for educational administration in the inner London area are still under consideration at the time of writing.

The 1944 Education Act, which, with some modifications, is still the principal governing statute for England and Wales, provides that the system of public education "shall be organised in three progressive stages to be known as primary education, secondary education and further education". Section 41 of the Act makes it

> the duty of every local education authority to secure the provision for their area of adequate facilities for further education, that is to say,
>
> (a) Full-time and part-time education for persons over compulsory school age; and
>
> (b) leisure-time occupation in such organised cultural training and recreative activities as are suited to their requirements, for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided for that purpose.

The above section of the Act requires L.E.A.s to "secure the provision", not "provide", and Section 42 instructs them to co-operate with other providers, especially the universities and educational associations (e.g. the W.E.A.). Section 53 provides that the facilities for each of the three stages of education should include "adequate facilities for recreation and social and physical training", to be "secured" in co-operation as appropriate with voluntary organisations. Whereas L.E.A.s have a clear statutory obligation to provide school places for all their children between the ages of five and sixteen, their responsibilities for further education are expressed in much vaguer terms. Not surprisingly there are considerable contrasts between L.E.A.s in terms of their achievements in further education, particularly in the non-vocational area.(1)

The statutory freedom of L.E.A.s to decide their own priorities in further education is reinforced by the system of local government finance. The two main sources of income of local authorities are rates, a local tax levied on occupied property (houses, offices, factories, etc.), calculated annually as a charge per pound (£) of rateable value; and central government grants. Except for a few services (mainly concerned with law and order) which attract specific grants, the payments from the government come in the form of the Rate Support Grant. This is paid by the Department of the Environment, in support of council services as a whole. It should be emphasised that the Department of Education and Science, with a few minor exceptions, does not grant-aid L.E.A. educational provision.

The central government now makes a Grant-Related Expenditure Assessment (G.R.E.A.) for each local council. This is the amount needed, according to the civil servants involved, to provide a standard level of services, taking into account such factors as the numbers of children of school age and the numbers of elderly people. The amount of R.S.G. actually paid to each council depends upon its circumstances. Councils with a high rateable value in relation to G.R.E.A. receive much less than the current average of 52% of relevant expenditure, those with a relatively low rateable value per head receive appreciably more.

During recent years the Rate Support Grant has been reduced as follows:

1979-80	61%
1981-82	59%
1982-83	56%
1983-84	53%
1984-85	52%

Total expenditure by local authorities in 1978-79 was £11,037,000,000. By 1983-84 this figure had risen in **cash** terms to £20,550,000,000 but in **real** terms (at 1978-79 constant prices) to £11,474,000,000, an increase of 4%. In 1984-85 the R.S.G. will be £11,900,000,000. If the 1979-80 percentage of R.S.G. had been maintained, the latter figure would be £2,000,000,000 more.

The government sets approved spending levels for local authorities, based partly on G.R.E.A. and partly on expenditure in preceding years. If a council exceeds its approved spending level, part of its R.S.G. allocation is withdrawn. The penalties for 1983-84 and 1984-85 were:

	1983-84	1984-85
1% over spending target - cut in R.S.G.	1%	2%
2% " " " " " "	2%	6%
3% " " " " " "	7%	14%
4% " " " " " "	12%	23%
	plus 5% for each extra 1% over target	plus 9% for each extra 1% over target

Under this system, a council which went substantially over target would lose all its R.S.G. (The Greater London Council, which had a low R.S.G. allocation and spent 80% more than its G.R.E.A. in 1983-84, had already lost all its grant.) Therefore the government would have no power to limit its expenditure - the latter would be a matter for the ratepayers alone. To meet this problem, the government has presented to parliament a Bill to allow it to set limits to what local authorities may legally raise in rates. Councils with budgets of less than £10 million a year will be exempt.

To justify this policy, the government has put forward a dual constitutional theory; that local authorities should operate within the framework of major central government policies, one of which is a

reduction in public expenditure; and that as only about a quarter of **total** local government expenditure is met by domestic ratepayers (one quarter by industrial and commercial ratepayers and one half by central government), the level of local government spending cannot be left to the unfettered decisions of locally-elected councillors.(2)

Education is by far the largest local government service covered by the R.S.G. system. The Department of Education and Science provides financial support to several other organisations concerned with the education of adults:

the universities, through the University Grants Committee;
the Open University;
the University Departments of Adult Education/Extramural Studies;
the Workers' Educational Association;
the long-term residential colleges;
voluntary Colleges of Higher Education and some specialised institutions of higher education;
the central bodies of some voluntary organisations, e.g. the Women's Institutes;
the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education;
the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit.

Note: The U.G.C. and Open University are funded by the D.E.S. to cover England, Scotland and Wales. The Northern Ireland Office provides the corresponding funds for that province. The D.E.S. also supports "central bodies" of organisations which cover the United Kingdom. In the case of the other organisations, the education departments of the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland Offices provide the funds for the parts of the organisations in those countries. Until recently the D.E.S. covered both England and Wales, and the grants policy for those two countries is still relatively uniform. Major differences, however, can be found in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Manpower Services Commission is funded by the Department of Employment. The M.S.C. has an important role in industrial training, and also finances the provision of some vocational courses in colleges of further education. The government recently announced in a White Paper **Training for Jobs** its intention of transferring a quarter of the funding for work-related non-advanced Further Education from the L.E.A.s to the M.S.C. Accordingly a sum rising to £200 millions a year will be transferred from the Rate Support Grant to the M.S.C.

There are therefore three government departments involved in the finance of adult education:

1. **The Department of the Environment** which is responsible for the Rate Support Grant, which, together with rate income, provides the resources for the Local Education Authorities.

2. **The Department of Education and Science** and **the Education Departments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland** which grant aid a wide range of organisations concerned with adult and post-secondary education.

3. **The Department of Employment** as the paymaster of the Manpower Services Commission.

The nomenclature of adult education is confusing. In the L.E.A. sector the basic term is **further**, meaning post-school, and including 16-18 year olds in colleges of further education whose contemporaries at school are in the secondary phase. The term **adult education** is used administratively as equivalent to non-vocational adult education, leaving vocational adult education to be described as further education. If administrative and educational definitions are used together, both "further" and "adult" can mean all or part of themselves or part of each other according to the context. To reduce the confusion, the limited L.E.A. definition of adult education will not be used in this book and the term "further" will be confined to its administrative context.

The system of adult education in England and Wales, together with the associated sectors of full-time further/higher education, is set out in Figure 1. The circle is divided into four quadrants by two lines. The vertical line derives from the division of labour between the L.E.A.s and the university/voluntary sector (above the horizontal line) and the distinction in mainstream higher education between the universities on the one hand and polytechnics and colleges of higher education on the other - the so-called Binary System. The horizontal line expresses the second major administrative division, between **vocational** and **non-vocational** provision. In the L.E.A. sector vocational courses are, in general, those which lead to examinations, and with a few exceptions the remainder are defined negatively as non-vocational. The corresponding category in the university/W.E.A. sector (quadrant 1) is defined positively as "liberal adult education" in terms of subjects and methodology. A small proportion of these courses leads to university diplomas or certificates, but most are pursued for their intrinsic value only. The vocational/non-vocational division has no administrative implications for the mainstream work of the universities.

The third distinction, which applies only to the L.E.A. sector, is between **advanced** courses - generally leading to qualifications beyond G.C.E. A-level - and **non-advanced.** Advanced further education is also known as higher education. Advanced courses, once they are approved by the D.E.S., are financed by a pooling arrangement. The cost is shared between all L.E.A.s on the basis of school population (69%) and non-domestic rateable value (31%). (3) Until 1979-80 there were no limits on the growth of these courses, other than the approval system and student demand, as only a very small proportion of the cost of any course would fall on the providing L.E.A. The government then imposed a financial limit on the size of the "pool", and has since imposed reductions in real terms. Between 1981-82 and 1982-83 the pool was reduced by 3½%, to £539 millions. The allocations for subsequent years were:

1983-84	£560 millions
1984-85	£580 millions.

When inflation is allowed for, these allocations mean a further cut. Allocations are now made by the National Advisory Body (a joint D.E.S.-L.E.A. body) to (a) each polytechnic; (b) each L.E.A. for its advanced F.E. work in colleges; (c) each voluntary college of higher education.

In 1982-83 the L.E.A.s with polytechnics and advanced F.E. work in colleges supplemented the pool allocation by an estimated total figure of £54 millions, i.e. about 10%. The pressures to control local government expenditure are reducing the level of this supplementation. A rough estimate for 1984-85 is £35 millions, a heavy cut when inflation is allowed for. Some L.E.A.s will give no supplementation to their polytechnics or colleges.

The cost of non-advanced work is met by the providing L.E.A., except for courses financed by outside agencies such as the Manpower Services Commission.

It should be noted that the whole circle in Figure 1 forms part of the public education system, broadly conceived. A high proportion of the cost of provision on the left side of the Binary Line is met from public (nearly all central government) funds.

In England and Wales the institutions in the L.E.A. sector which are primarily "vocational" are the following: (4)

1. **Polytechnics** (30 in number) are in many respects similar to universities. The main differences, apart from administration and finance, are that they lay a greater emphasis on applied studies; have more "sandwich" courses (which include periods in industry or a professional job), more part-time students, more undergraduates over the age of 25 and a proportion of non-advanced work; have less postgraduate work and research; and have degrees awarded by the Council for National Academic Awards (C.N.A.A.).

2. **Colleges and Institutes of Higher Education** (63). Most of these were created in the early 1970s when teacher training places were drastically reduced in number, either by the diversification of a former college of education or by mergers of two or more such colleges, or by mergers with colleges of technology, commerce or art. Some of these institutions are essentially colleges of education diversified with some degree and diploma courses in the liberal arts and social sciences. College degrees are awarded either by the C.N.A.A. or by an associated University. (**Note**: Some colleges in this category belong to religious bodies, not the L.E.A., and receive direct grants from the D.E.S. Functionally they are very similar to L.E.A. colleges with the same course range, and for the purpose of this survey may reasonably be included with the L.E.A. colleges). The colleges with a wide variety of courses range from a few which closely resemble the smaller polytechnics to those with a substantial proportion of non-advanced work which approximate more closely to colleges of further education. The precise titles of these

Institutions - "X College of Higher Education", "X College", or "X Institute of Higher Educataion" - are a matter for the governing L.E.A. or religious body, unlike the designation "polytechnic" which is conferred by the government.

3. **Colleges of Further Education** (about 600). This is a generic term covering institutions with a variety of names, for example college of technology, or just e.g. Blackburn College. Most are called College of Further Education.

   A few are specialist colleges of agriculture or art (although nearly all of the latter have now merged with polytechnics or other colleges) but most provide a wide range of courses. The larger colleges have some advanced work, but the main concern of this sector is non-advanced provision. Compared to polytechnics or colleges of higher education they have much higher proportions of 16-18 year olds and part-time students. Their non-degree work is geared to a complex system of examinations governed by national examination bodies or professional organisations.

The L.E.A. **non-vocational** programmes are provided through four kinds of institution.

First, most **colleges of further education** are involved to a greater or lesser degree. Some are the principal agencies for their locality, in which case they normally have departments of adult education. In addition most polytechnics and some colleges of higher education have a (usually small) non-vocational programme.

Secondly, the **institutes or centres of adult education** (formerly known as evening institutes) provide most of the L.E.A. non-vocational work. Some of the institutes have a modest headquarters of their own, usually converted school premises. Others operate from a small adult wing attached to a school. Nearly all the teachers are part-time. The full-time staff are few and have primarily administrative functions. About 70% of the classes meet in the evenings. Many institutes have satellite centres - in other schools, village halls, etc. - and a common pattern is a full-time head for the institute, and part-time heads for the larger out-stations.

A third form of organisation is the **community college.** These are quite different from the North American institutions of the same name, and combine a school (usually secondary), the youth service and adult education provision. Some of these, too, have satellite centres. Some L.E.A.s favour one of the above three kinds of institution, but many have adopted a pragmatic approach and use a combination of types to meet local cicumstances.

About 3% of the programmes of the institutes of adult education and community colleges lead to examinations, mainly G.C.E. O-level.

The rest are "non-vocational". The large institutes in London, of which the City Literary Institute is the best known, and a few L.E.A. colleges and institutes in other cities, provide a wide range of liberal academic subjects as well as craft/recreational courses. Most L.E.A. non-vocational provision, however, falls into one of five groups:- creative arts, domestic arts, physical education, languages and basic education. In addition liberal academic courses, provided by universities or the W.E.A., are often arranged in L.E.A. centres, so that the public is offered a comprehensive service.

L.E.A.s maintained or supported 42 **short term residential colleges** in 1976, in a few cases in co-operation with the W.E.A. and/or a university. Seven of them have been closed as a result of cuts in educational expenditure. Most of the colleges are accommodated in converted country houses and provide short courses - a weekend, a few days or a week in length. The subjects include both the normal L.E.A. non-vocational range and liberal adult education, the latter often being provided in association with, or drawing on the staffs of, universities or the W.E.A. Some L.E.A.s use the same colleges for in-service training, others have separate colleges for this function. (Other short-term colleges are maintained by trade unions, universities, voluntary bodies and other organisations, and some further uses will be described in Chapter IV.)

Scotland has a separate educational system, with its own traditions and values. The basic legislative provision, corresponding to the 1944 Act in England and Wales, is the Education (Scotland) Act of 1962, which requires the local education authorities "to secure ... an adequate and efficient provision of ... further education", defined in roughly the same way as in Section 41 of the 1944 Act. The L.E.A.s are the nine regional councils and three island councils. The Strathclyde Region, based on Glasgow, has 2,466,000 people - half of the population of Scotland, and the Lothian Region centred on Edinburgh, has 756,000. The low population density of the extensive highland and island authorities severely limits the provision of most kinds of education for adults.

Scotland has hitherto had fourteen colleges known as "central institutions". Three of these are agricultural colleges, supported by the Scottish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. The remainder - six general colleges for advanced education and five specialising in art, domestic science or music - are financed by the Scottish Education Department. The S.E.D. also funds seven colleges of education.

The Scottish L.E.A.s provide seventy-seven colleges or centres of further education, twenty of which are concerned mainly with advanced work. Two of the latter, Glasgow College of Technology and Napier College, Edinburgh, rank with the general purpose central institutions as roughly equivalent to the English polytechnics and are shortly to become central institutions. The "pooling" of expenditure on further education goes much further in Scotland than in England,

including not only advanced courses but all full-time provision.

The L.E.A.s provide courses similar to those of the English non-vocational L.E.A. sector (Figure I, quadrant 2), through about 150 institutes or centres of adult and community education. There is a closer association between non-vocational adult education and the youth service in Scotland than in England, the two activities being seen as part of a general service of community education. (5)

In Northern Ireland, the local administration of education is in the hands of five regional Education and Library Boards, which are financed by the Northern Ireland Department of Education. The Boards maintain twenty-seven colleges of further education (most of them known as technical colleges) which have between them about two hundred out-centres. The colleges and the centres provide a wide range of vocational and non-vocational courses. The province has three colleges of education (two of them Roman Catholic) funded by the Northern Ireland Education Department. (6)

An important development has recently taken place in the province, the merger of the Ulster Polytechnic (located near Belfast) with the New University of Ulster (located at Coleraine, with a subsidiary campus in Londonderry) to form the University of Ulster, which will operate on all three sites. The other institution of higher education in Northern Ireland, which is not involved in the restructuring, is Queen's University, Belfast.

To the left of the "Binary Line" in Figure 1 is the university/voluntary sector. Here there are four main agencies at work - the universities, the Open University, the Workers' Educational Association and the long-term residential colleges. Their functions and financial arrangements are as follows.

1. **The Open University** deals almost exclusively with part-time students, studying at home by means of "distance teaching" - correspondence, radio and television - supplemented by some local tutorial work and residential summer courses. The O.U. currently has about 60,000 students working towards a modular first degree (with an annual graduation rate of 6,000); associate students, taking part of the undergraduate programme; and people enrolled on short courses. The total student population is about 100,000, including a small number of postgraduates, but excluding people (nearly 22,000 in 1983) who buy teaching packs but do not enrol for tuition. The Open University receives a direct grant from the Department of Education and Science, which in 1980 met about 90% of its expenditure. Since then the grant has declined in real terms (although some additional funds have been provided for special purposes, as explained in Chapter IV, section 10) and on the instructions of the D.E.S. student fees have doubled and now provide about 14% of the total income. The D.E.S. grant has been frozen at the current £59 millions a year, which will cause a reduction in expenditure estimated at 10% or more during the next three years.

2. **The Universities** (32 in England, plus the federal University of Wales; eight in Scotland and two in Northern Ireland).

2.1. Mainstream university work - undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates - is financed from two main sources apart from income from endowments, namely,grants from the D.E.S. channelled through the University Grants Committee and student fees. The fees of British full-time students on undergraduate and certain postgraduate courses are normally paid by the L.E.A.s, which recover 90% of the cost from the D.E.S. (this applies also to similar courses in L.E.A. colleges and polytechnics). Overseas students from outside the European Economic Community are charged much higher fees.

In 1981 the government reduced the annual allocation made to the University Grants Committee by about 9%, to be achieved progressively over three academic years. The government had already withdrawn from the U.G.C. a sum equal to the estimated "subsidy" on overseas students. The two policies together cut the funding of the university system by 13%. The U.G.C. distributed the cuts unevenly between universities. Some escaped lightly, a few lost one third or more of their grant.

These cuts were imposed when the numbers of 18-year-olds, and therefore of the principal clientele for higher education, were reaching their highest level for many years. The main effects of these cuts on the education of adults have been as follows:

(a) Most universities with "responsible body" adult education departments have reduced the funding of the latter as part of their programme of economies.

(b) It has become more difficult for mature students to gain entry to universities, because so many qualified young people have been turned away.

(c) The disruption to the university system, and the reductions of staff in universities caused by the cuts, have discouraged the development of part-time degree programmes.

Part of the money withheld from universities has been allocated for "new blood" posts, designed to encourage the recruitment of lecturers under the age of 35, mainly in the fields of science and technology. In 1984, 240 such posts were created in science and technology and 60 in the arts, social sciences, law and other non-science areas and 46 other posts have been created in Information Technology. These appointments may assist the provision of post-experience courses, described below.

A further cut of 2½% has been imposed on all universities for 1984-85, and annual cuts of about 2% are planned for the next few years.

2.2. In addition to the research undertaken by university teachers

as a normal part of their work, research projects are often separately funded, by government agencies or by industry.

2.3. Post-experience courses, often taking the form of short residential courses held during the university vacations, are provided to bring people in industry and the professions in touch with the latest academic developments in their fields and to give them a period of intellectual refreshment and reflection. They are normally self-financing, with the fees being paid by the employers of the students. (Similar provision is made by polytechnics and some L.E.A. colleges. The in-service provision of the D.E.S. is discussed in Chapter IV, section 1.) All the above work - 2.1., 2.2., 2.3. - is located in quadrant 4 of Figure 1.

2.4. Twenty-three universities in England and four colleges of the University of Wales are designated as "Responsible Bodies" in receipt of a direct grant from the D.E.S. or the Welsh Education Department for the provision of "the liberal education of adults" (quadrant 1). The students in this area are part-time, attending mainly in the evenings and/or at weekends (although daytime work is growing), with some vacation residential courses in Britain or abroad. Some courses lead to university academic qualifications, but most are taken by the students to satisfy intellectual interests and/or because of their relevance to social roles.

The universities in this group have established departments of adult education (known by a variety of names, including extramural studies and continuing education), which have their own full-time academic and administrative staff and also employ members of staff of other university departments and others on a part-time basis. They operate over extensive areas, providing courses not only in the universities themselves but also in many towns and villages. Over a third of these universities provide courses in the **subject** of Adult Education leading to diplomas or higher degrees, but this forms part of mainstream university work (quadrant 4 of Figure 1).

The grant formula used until 1984 was: 75% of the gross salary costs of approved academic posts, and up to 75% of other staff costs related to teaching. Most university departments received a grant equivalent to about 70% of the cost of employing full- and part-time staff for the grant-aided programme.

Until 1982-83, the D.E.S. grant was maintained, except that the annual increase to allow for inflation was usually less than the actual increase in costs. Late in 1982-83 the D.E.S. cut 2½% off the grant for that year. In December 1983 the D.E.S. announced the following changes:

(a) The grant to the departments in **England** to be reduced as follows:

1983-84	£5.6 millions	
1984-85	£5.4 "	-a cut of 3.6%
1985-86	£5.1 "	" " " 8.9%
1986-87	£4.8 "	" " " 14.3% over 1983-84

plus in each year the Treasury allowance for inflation.

(b) The grant will no longer be based upon "input factors". From 1 August 1985 no cognisance will be taken of the employment of full-time academic staff.

(c) The grant will henceforth be based upon "output factors" with the following formula:

5% of the total grant will be held back for special projects, to be allocated at the discretion of the D.E.S.

9.5% will be based upon the proportion of full-time university staff employed for adult courses.

9.5% upon the scale of provision, as determined by numbers of effective students.

76% upon the size of the programme, as determined by the numbers of "effective student hours".

(Negotiations about some of these arrangements are still in progress.)

(d) Departments are urged to produce the maximum fee income from all except disadvantaged students. The D.E.S. has said that "satisfactory arrangements for raising fee income will almost certainly be a factor taken into account" when fixing the grant for individual departments.

The distribution of grant **between** universities will depend upon their performance according to the above formula. To limit fluctuations from one year to the next, the actual grant paid will be calculated on a three year moving average. Universities which hitherto have not had the status of "responsible bodies" are being encouraged to apply for it, but any grant made to them will come out of the reducing total (£4.8 millions in 1986-87) given above. Similar cuts are being imposed in Wales. Scotland and Northern Ireland have different systems. In Scotland university full-time costs are met from general university funds, and part-time costs are normally the responsibility of the local authorities and therefore subject to the economising pressures mentioned above. Small administrative grants are made by the Scottish Education Department. The adult education work of the Universities in Northern Ireland is funded by the N.I. Department of Education.

It is impossible to give figures for the financing of the liberal adult education provision of the "Responsible Body" universities, because the departments concerned do varying amounts of other work. At a rough and not altogether reliable estimate, D.E.S. or Welsh Office grants provide over 40% of the total expenditure of the departments, and general University funds 30-35%.

3. **The Workers' Educational Association** consists of about 940 branches (run by voluntary officers), grouped into twenty-one districts, with a modest central office in London. The fifteen districts in England and two in Wales are "Responsible Bodies" receiving

D.E.S./Welsh Office grant on a similar basis to the universities. Some W.E.A. courses are arranged jointly with a university, which provides the tutor, others independently. The latter provision is normally less advanced than university courses, and includes a good deal of informal and pioneering work.

In 1976-77 the incomes of the English and Welsh districts came from the following sources, in percentages:

D.E.S.	L.E.A.s	Student fees and other voluntary income	Other sources
54	20	21	5

Since 1979 there has been a considerable reduction in overall L.E.A. support for reasons discussed above, although the effect has been geographically very uneven. A rough estimate of the proportion of income from this source in 1983-84 is 11%. In compensation the D.E.S./Welsh Office grants were increased between 1979 and 1983 at twice the rate of inflation, which in these difficult times for adult education is relatively generous treatment.

The D.E.S. grant to the fifteen English districts (a similar policy is promised for Wales) is being reduced on the same lines as the University Responsible Bodies, but to a lesser extent.

1983-84	£2.4 millions	
1986-87	£2.2 millions	a cumulative reduction of 8.3%

The formula for the new grant system is still the subject of negotiation, but is likely to be as follows:

5% of total grant held back for special projects

75% of the rebate for unemployed, pensioners and other disadvantaged, subject to a minimum assumed charge of 20p an hour to be met out of the **total grant**

the salary and related costs of district secretaries to be met out of the total grant

the rest of the grant to be divided according to the number of effective student hours

no account to be taken of the employment of full-time tutor organisers (hitherto grant-aided as with university approved posts - see 2.4. above)

no District's grant to be cut from one year to the next by more than 10%, **after** allowing for the cut in the total grant.

Note:

(a) The D.E.S. wishes to widen the definition of grant-aided work for both university R.B.s and the W.E.A. from the present "liberal education of adults", to a wording which is likely to be "general education not designed to serve specific vocatio

vocational purposes" - planned "in consultation with other providers" (especially the L.E.A.s).

(b) A special fund for work with the unemployed (£500,000 in 1984-85, £1 million in each of 1985-86 and 1986-87) has been created. The W.E.A. may be allocated a small part of this fund, for which any providers may bid.

(c) W.E.A. Districts which work closely with universities are likely to suffer through the depletion of university resources.

The three W.E.A. districts in Scotland receive grants from the Scottish Education Department for organising and administrative costs. For their main teaching programme they must secure financial support from the local authorities and conform to the latter's regulations and fee structure. The S.E.D. does not give grants for teaching costs, and currently imposes a limit on its grant equal to 50% of the educational expenditure of the Scottish districts.

The Northern Ireland District of the W.E.A. receives a grant from the N.I. Department of Education on a formula which provides 90% of approved full-time costs and 75% of other costs (both organising/administrative and teaching). There are, of course, no independent L.E.A.s in the province. The Northern Ireland District is not bound by the same regulations as in England and Wales, and provides some "recreational" classes which in England would be the responsibility of the L.E.A.s.

The D.E.S. pays a grant to the central office of the W.E.A. which serves all four countries.

4. **Long-term residential colleges** - six in England, one in Wales and one in Scotland - provide full-time one and two year courses, mainly for students who left school at the minimum leaving age, and some shorter courses. The colleges receive direct grants from the D.E.S. or its counterparts, and in addition the fees of British students on long courses are paid under the same grant system as for university students. A new college has now been established in Northern Ireland.

There are many other voluntary organisations which play a part in the education of adults, and their operations will be described in Chapter IV. Special mention should be made here, however, of an organisation which covers both the L.E.A. and the voluntary sectors (quadrants 1 and 2 of Figure 1), the Educational Centres Association. The E.C.A. consists of twelve independent and voluntary educational centres, run by committees elected by the members, and usually employing a full-time warden; a few university centres; and about 125 L.E.A. centres/colleges/community colleges which have developed systems of student democracy, and represent a strongly-developing trend in the L.E.A. sector. The independent centres receive varying degrees of financial support from their L.E.A.s, and their class programmes are usually provided by the L.E.A.s, universities and W.E.A.

For the last few years the D.E.S. has paid a grant to the E.C.A. (about £18,000 in 1983-84) to allow it to employ a full-time secretary. The grant is now to be withdrawn.

At national, regional and local level there are varied types of machinery for co-operation between the providers of "non-vocational" adult education. In some localities co-ordinating committees have been set up to ensure that the programmes of the different agencies add up to a comprehensive provision for the people of the area. As part of this co-operation, some university and W.E.A. classes are held in L.E.A. buildings, normally free of charge, although under financial pressure this principle is being eroded, e.g. by charges for caretaking in some L.E.A. areas.

The organisational structure of industrial training, unlike that of the public education system, is the same for England, Wales and Scotland. The main agency is the Manpower Services Commission, funded by the Department of Employment and the corresponding sections of the Welsh and Scottish Offices, which therefore decide the main lines of policy. The M.S.C. is, however, constructed as a tripartite body, with members from local government, industry and the trade unions. The expenditure of the M.S.C. has risen steadily, from £727 millions in 1979-80 to about £2.3 billions a year in 1983-84 and 1984-85, of which about £1 billion a year is earmarked for the Youth Training Scheme. The rise and fall of the Industrial Training Boards will be discussed in Chapter IV, section 3. In Northern Ireland the corresponding organisation is the N.I. Training Executive, financed by the N.I. Department of Manpower Services.

Finally, there is an extensive private sector, consisting of organisations providing education for adults without direct support from public funds, although a few of the students may receive grants from their L.E.A.s. First, there are institutions of higher education, parallel in function to some colleges or departments of colleges in the publicly-financed sectors. They include the University of Buckingham; colleges of music and drama; theological colleges; colleges of law; and training institutions for other professions, including accountancy. Their courses are entirely or mainly for full-time students, including some mature students.

A second group is formed of private colleges of further education: secretarial colleges, catering for both full-time (mainly 16-21) and part-time students; and colleges preparing students for examinations, mainly 16-19s working on O and A levels.

Another group, currently growing in size, could be labelled "other business studies", and includes organisations providing courses for the employees of particular firms on information technology or business methods.

Fourthly, there are several hundred language schools, teaching foreign languages, or English as a second language, or both. Some of them participate in a voluntary accreditation process.

The fifth group consists of correspondence colleges. Most of their courses prepare students for examinations, but some are designed for leisure pursuits, the creative arts, or domestic arts. Here, too, there is a voluntary accreditation scheme, and forty-three colleges are currently recognised by the Council for the Accreditation of Correspondence Colleges.

At least four other categories can be identified: vocational training schools, e.g. for hairdressing; professional organisations which provide courses, e.g. for management; driving schools; and a wide variety of clubs, societies and enterprises which offer courses, residential and non-residential, in artistic and cultural pursuits, hobbies and sports.

The enrolment statistics of different sectors of adult education will be discussed in the appropriate sections of Chapter IV. Approximate figures for the four quadrants of Figure I, for adult education as defined in Chapter I, are:

1.	University R.B.s, W.E.A., Long-term colleges:	350,000
2.	L.E.A. non-vocational adult education:	2,250,000
3.	L.E.A. vocational adult education:	over 1,100,000
4.	Mainstream university, Open University and post experience:	over 300,000

REFERENCES CHAPTER II

Note: For topics considered in greater detail in Chapter IV, see the references at the end of that chapter.

1. National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, **Year Book of Adult Continuing Education 1984-85**, pp. 11-14; Open University Course E222, Unit 14, **Adults and Education**, pp. 11-26.

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Chapter III

The Evolution of the Theory and Practice of Adult Education in Britain

The adult education systems described briefly in Chapter II are complex. They have evolved over a long period and in response to a variety of needs and pressures. They cannot be understood without some reference to the historical background. Furthermore, the more influential theories, e.g. about the role of the universities in adult education, are best examined in relation to the practices of which they were either the cause or the consequence. In the context of comparative studies it is important to know how far the success of a particular idea can be attributed to its inherent validity and how far to the special circumstances of the place and time.

The standard history of adult education in Britain begins with the middle ages, but for the present purpose it is enough to go back to about 1820.(1) There was at that time nothing in England and Wales that could be described as a public education system. Schools for children of the common people were provided from charitable benefactions; by religious organisations; and by private enterprise - the latter establishments ranging from respectable academies to "dame" schools in some of which the teacher herself was illiterate. In the industrial districts schooling for working-class children was normally limited to a few years, ending at the age of nine when they could be usefully employed, and many children never attended a day school at all.

Out of the deficiencies of day school provision developed the rudiments of an adult education system. Schools began to open in the evening to teach basic subjects to children, young people and some adults. Sunday Schools, established for religious education, taught the art of reading to make scripture accessible, and many added writing and even arithmetic to the curriculum. Although children and adults could attend the same classes, a movement developed from about 1800 for the establishment of separate Adult Schools.

Amongst the churches, the most distinctive contribution to adult education came from the Methodists. They devised training programmes for the lay preachers who occupied most of their pulpits, and also required their members to attend classes for religious education on weekday evenings as well as chapel services on Sundays.

Scotland was much better supplied with (mainly parochial)

schools than England, but there was an even more striking contrast in higher education. In 1820 England had only two universities, Oxford and Cambridge. (The first university college in London was opened in 1828. The University of Durham, at first little more than a theological college, was founded in 1832.) Scotland had four universities for a population only one sixth of that of England and Wales. Not only were the Scottish universities much more accessible to relatively poor scholars than those in England and Wales, but there had also been, since the middle of the eighteenth century, efforts to open some courses of university lectures to interested members of the public.

Experiments in teaching scientific knowledge to skilled workers in Glasgow led to the creation of the first major adult education movement, the Mechanics' Institutes, which spread rapidly from Scotland to England. The institutes were established in the major industrial towns in the 1820s, with the aim of educating skilled workers in the scientific principles underlying their craft. There was often an additional ideological motive - to condition the skilled workers to be sober and loyal supporters of industrial capitalism. With a few exceptions the Mechanics' Institutes were firmly controlled by their bourgeois sponsors through a constitutional system in which the lowest level of subscriptions, appropriate for working men, carried few or no voting rights.

The Mechanics' Institutes had some success with scientific classes for artisans, e.g. the chemistry of dyeing or the mechanics of steam power, but they soon found that development was being held back by the poor level of general education of the workers. Elementary classes for adults were therefore started, and were often well supported. It gradually emerged that young men eager to improve their minds and prospects by studying at the local Mechanics' Institutes would come not from the machine shop or factory floor but from the warehouse and the office, and commercial subjects grew in importance.

At the same time the middle classes were keen to learn something about the scientific and technical achievements of the age, and well-presented popular lectures on e.g. electricity and magnetism, or geology, drew good audiences. The scope of the lectures gradually widened to include more philosophical and literary subjects. The reading room, with its newspapers and journals, and the library were other well-used institute services.

The Mechanics' Institute movement spread from the cities first into the smaller towns and then, by the 1840s, into the villages. In 1851 there were nearly 700 M.I.s in Britain. The smaller institutes, with a few exceptions, confined their educational provision to a reading room, library and popular lectures. The buildings which were erected to house the institutes - modest in most villages but often very imposing in the large towns - formed a useful addition to the social capital of the communities

concerned. The M.I.s had become an established part of national life, although within a generation of their foundation they were generally providing different kinds of education, to different classes of people, from those envisaged by the founders of the pioneer institutes.

The Mechanics' Institutes were secular in character, determined to avoid theological controversies, and most of their leaders in the industrial towns were adherents of one of the nonconformist churches. There was consequently a disposition on the part of the Church of England to regard the M.I.s as a threat, which was countered by the establishment of Church Institutes. The latter copied the general educational features of the M.I.s - classes, lectures and libraries - but normally followed the rule that nothing should be taught which was contrary to the doctrines of the Church of England.

A more decisive rejection of the ethos of the M.I.s came from politically-conscious working men involved in the great popular agitations of the 1830s and 1840s. The sense of alienation between the workers and the employing classes was normally too strong to be overcome by even the most benevolent attempts of the bourgeoisie to promote the education of the workers, but the ideological associations of the M.I.s and, with a few exceptions, their undemocratic structure, made the barrier insurmountable.

In the "age of agitation" campaigns for the limitation of hours of work in textile mills and against a deliberately harsh new poor law system merged into a general demand for democratic political reform - the People's Charter. The Chartists developed their own programme of political education, drawing its inspiration from earlier reform campaigns, but borrowing the organisation of meetings and speakers from Methodism. Some of the local Chartist leaders, especially in the industrial north, were themselves Methodist lay preachers, although the price paid for their political activities was often expulsion from the Methodist ranks.

The shorter-hours movement was eventually successful; the anti-poor law movement had to be content with a few tactical victories; but the main political effort of Chartism ended in failure in the "revolutionary" year 1848. Afterwards the politically-conscious workers began to turn their attention increasingly to self-improvement and mutual-help programmes, with the idea of building a better society from the bottom upwards. They made use of such instruments as friendly benefit societies, temperance societies and some of the more democratic Mechanics' Institutes, but central to their endeavours was usually the Co-operative Society. Retail co-operatives had existed for many years, but a new model of co-operation was established at Rochdale, a textile town in Lancashire, in 1844. The Rochdale Pioneers Co-operative Society allocated 2½% of its profits (most of which were returned as a dividend on purchases) to educational purposes. As

the new-model co-operative movement spread, the societies which took education seriously used their modest funds for social education as well as training in the principles and practice of co-operation.

Another form of educational self-help was the Mutual Improvement Society. A group of people, usually young men, formed a society for the discussion of social, economic or other current issues. The members took it in turns to research a subject and present a paper for discussion. Free-standing mutual improvement societies tended by their very nature to be relatively short-lived, and it is difficult to estimate their numbers before the 1850s, when the spread of local newspapers began to provide a record of such activities. Anglican churches and particularly nonconformist chapels adapted the idea of the mutual improvement society by establishing societies, under a variety of names but operating usually on the mutual principle, attached to the place of worship. The social conscience of churchmen was also responsible for the establishment of Working Men's Colleges, of which Sheffield People's College (1842) and London Working Men's College (1854) were the most important. There were periodic revivals of the Adult School movement, particularly, under Quaker influence, in the late nineteenth century.

The provision of schooling directly under public control was not introduced until 1870, when Parliament authorised the establishment in England and Wales of elected School Boards, financed by a local education rate. A similar Act was passed for Scotland in 1872. However, the voluntary school system had been gradually expanding, aided by an annual government grant which rose from £20,000 a year in 1833 to £837,000 in 1859. Grants were paid to evening schools but on rather restrictive conditions and from 1871 to 1893 only for young people.

From the 1850s the development of technical and commercial education was stimulated by the establishment of an examination system and by the grants offered to teachers of science by the government's newly-established Science and Art Department. Classes in Mechanics' Institutes, especially in commercial subjects, gained a new lease of life, and many other voluntary organisations, including co-operative societies, came into this field. In 1878 the corporation and some of the major companies of the city of London created the City and Guilds of London Institute for the Advancement of Technical Education. The latter established two colleges in London, one of which, the Central Institution (now part of Imperial College) resembled a German Technische Hochschule. The "City and Guilds" also became the leading examination body for technical subjects.(2)

The second major adult education movement of the nineteenth century, University Extension, was launched in the 1870s. "Extension" had two meanings, the creation of new university

colleges and the provision of university lectures for adults in towns throughout the country. The two developments went hand in hand, some colleges being helped in their early years by the provision of lecture courses by one of the ancient universities, and others being formed as a direct result of extension lecture programmes. London University offered an invaluable support through its external degree system. Between 1871 and 1881 colleges were established in seven major industrial towns (Owens College, Manchester, had opened in 1851). They were a product both of the wealth and pride of these towns, and also of an awareness that Britain was losing her industrial lead, partly through neglect of technical education. (By the 1870s Germany had eleven Technische Hochschulen as well as twenty other universities.) The new colleges responded to the scientific and technical needs of local industry, and had both day and evening students.

The system of extension lectures was created by James Stuart, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who in 1867 began a series of pioneering lectures on scientific topics in northern industrial towns. He found strong support from both middle class women, who had virtually no opportunities for higher education, and working men, particularly the members of the Rochdale Pioneers' Co-operative Society. He became convinced that "the highest class of education, if properly adapted, was capable of being appreciated by, and of real use to, the general mass of the people". Stuart argued also that the liberal education of adults, particularly those with a limited educational background, required teachers of university quality. It was easy to impart "unsuggestive facts", but only the master of a subject could make it accessible to lively but untutored minds. He appealed to both the self-interest and the social conscience of the University of Cambridge - if it wanted to enhance its influence in national affairs, it would have to share its benefits more widely, not only by responding to demands from the community but also by going out and stimulating them. Coming to Cambridge from Scotland, Stuart had been offended by the "grievous class distinctions" of England, underpinned by a "system of class education", and he argued that social harmony would be increased by a system of adult education in which "rich and poor, men and women" were taught together.(3)

Cambridge began its extension lecture programme in 1873. London, Oxford and the Victoria University (a federation of colleges in Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds) eventually followed suit. However, the universities provided only the central administration. The costs of the lecture courses - about £70 for 12 lectures - had to be met locally. To attract the large audience that was needed for financial reasons, and at the same time help the earnest student, an ingenious pyramid of learning was constructed. A formal lecture was followed by an optional discussion class, the members of which could, if they wished, submit essays for correction, and take an examination at the end of the course. The average numbers at these four stages in the 1890s were roughly 100 - 30 - 15 - 10. Summer schools at Oxford or Cambridge offered further opportunities for study.

Between 50,000 and 60,000 people were attending extension courses in the early 1890s. The most popular subjects were history, literature and science. Middle class women predominated but workers were few except where there was a local working-class organisation e.g. a co-operative society, willing to sponsor and subsidise the work. Finance was only one problem. It was found that class alienation could be overcome only if local control was in working-class hands.

The leaders of the extension movement, which aimed at "the breaking down of intellectual caste and the universal extension of the intellectual franchise", were disappointed at the limited working-class response and also frustrated by the need to provide short lecture courses, with regular changes of subject, in order to attract enough people to balance the books. The government had in 1889 begun to grant-aid the university colleges, but refused to provide support for extension lectures.(4)

At the same period the government at last responded to the long agitation for the improvement of technical education. In 1889-90 the newly-created local authorities (county and county borough councils) were enabled to spend both rate income, and a special fund derived from duties on alcohol, on technical and commercial education. In many towns the class work of the Mechanics' Institute (with or without the building) was taken over by the local authority. Vocational courses for young people organised by co-operative societies and other voluntary bodies were also handed over. New colleges or technical institutes were established. In London most of the polytechnics which had been founded on the model of the Regent Street Polytechnic (1882) became the reponsibility of the London County Council, and offered courses ranging from elementary to degree levels.

Most of the provision in these new or adapted institutions consisted of part-time evening courses leading to craft, technical or commercial qualifications. A revitalised evening school service developed alongside, and overlapping with, the technical colleges and institutes, from 1893, when new regulations for Evening Continuation Schools offered more generous government grants without restriction of age. The number of evening school enrolments (most of them on remedial or vocational courses) in England and Wales rose from 116,000 in 1893 to 528,000 in 1902. In the latter year a new Education Act made the county and county borough councils the principal local education authorities, with wider powers for the provision or support of post-school education. At the same time the central government's system of grants, now paid mainly to L.E.A.s, was extended. (5)

The technical college/evening school sector had its strengths and weaknesses. Most of the staff were part-time and many were poorly qualified. Facilities were often primitive. On the other hand, from this period the "service" ethos of the technical

college emerged - comprehensive, flexible and quick to respond to local needs.

The establishment of an L.E.A. service for vocational education allowed the co-operative movement, or rather that part of it which was keen on education, to concentrate its attention on education for social purposes. Attempts were made to forge a closer alliance with university extension. Eventually this was achieved by a lowly co-operative clerk, who had wanted to go to Oxford and become an Anglican priest, Albert Mansbridge, who founded the Workers' Educational Association in 1903.

Mansbridge had a "gift of tongues" which enabled him to appeal simultaneously to university extensionists, co-operators and moderate men in the trade unions and the broader labour movement. He argued both that workers needed knowledge to achieve power, and that the power which they already possessed made better education essential. The W.E.A. was federal in two senses. The local branches, virtually autonomous, were themselves essentially federations of local working-class organisations interested in education - co-operative societies, trade union branches, church and chapel societies, Adult Schools and various educational and political clubs.

The W.E.A. set out to reform the university extension system and in 1907-08 Mansbridge and his allies (who included radical academics and Churchmen with a social conscience) persuaded the University of Oxford to accept a remarkable new deal. The elements were: tutorial classes for not more than thirty students lasting for two years (almost immediately increased to three years); joint W.E.A.-university control at the centre; local control in the hands of the W.E.A. branch; and new diploma courses at Oxford to cater for working-class students who would go on from the tutorial classes for full-time study. The government's Board of Education, impressed by the high academic aspirations of the W.E.A. and its devotion to university values - which made it look "responsible" - agreed to provide grants for tutorial classes. It proved financially impossible to send more than a handful of working-class students to the university, but otherwise the "tutorial class movement" was an outstanding success. Other universities followed the lead of Oxford and by 1913-14 there were 145 tutorial classes with 3,200 students. The aim of the students was not material advancement, but a mixture of self-fulfilment and training for social action. The aim of the W.E.A. was to help workers to "raise, not rise out of" their class. Both the academic achievements of the tutorial class students, and the partial realisation of the reformer's dream of uniting the worlds of labour and learning, attracted attention abroad as well as at home.(6)

The report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction, published in 1919, was in effect a hymn of praise to the ideals and achievements of the W.E.A. and the tutorial class movement. Liberal adult education was declared to be

a "universal need", in contrast to technical education which had only an instrumental value. "Adult education is a permanent national necessity, an inseparable aspect of citizenship, and therefore should be both universal and lifelong."(7)

The W.E.A.s alliance with the universities and reliance upon public funds led to its rejection by those socialists who argued that only a completely independent working-class education would be free of capitalist influence. This ideological struggle came to a head in Ruskin College, a residential college for working-class students established in Oxford in 1899 with rather similar aims to those of the W.E.A. The left-wing students broke away in 1909 to form a rival Labour College, which developed a network of extramural classes in opposition to the W.E.A. Other socialists took the view that only the high-quality education provided by the universities was good enough for the training of working-class activists, and that the W.E.A.'s machinery of democratic control was adequate protection against manipulation in the interests of capitalism. This is, of course, grossly to oversimplify a complex and subtle argument.

In addition to organising tutorial classes, W.E.A. branches arranged shorter, informal courses and study circles, often at the request of their affiliated societies. In 1924, however, the Board of Education grant system was extended from the three-year tutorial classes to include terminal and sessional classes provided by the W.E.A., as well as some shorter university courses. The W.E.A. study circles and informal classes taken by voluntary, unpaid leaders and tutors were gradually replaced by regular classes taken by paid part-time tutors. Later modifications in the grant system, and additional support from the Carnegie and Cassel Trusts, encouraged the appointment of full-time resident tutors, particularly for the development of rural programmes. The grants paid to the universities and the W.E.A. were for "the liberal education of adults", which meant essentially the area in which the W.E.A. was interested - economics, politics, history, literature, philosophy, etc. From this stems the present division of the non-vocational sector in most of England and Wales between the "responsible bodies" (the universities and the W.E.A.) and the L.E.A.s.

The rivalry between the W.E.A. and the Labour College movement (the residential Labour College closed in 1929) continued, with different trade unions supporting each side, and undoubtedly inhibiting the development of trade union education. The work of the W.E.A. had important social consequences. It produced many local councillors, trade union officials and M.P.s - seventy Labour M.P.s in the 1945 Parliament and fourteen members of the government had been W.E.A. students or tutors - but it should be remembered that the numbers of its students were never very large: 64,000 in 1937-38, 111,000 in 1948-49 and about 180,000 today.(8)

During the inter-war years vocational further education (technical, commercial and art) continued to be predominantly a part-time activity, mainly in the evenings with some day release for young workers. The work was shared by technical colleges, and the evening institutes which emerged as successors to the evening continuation schools. The colleges were responsible for the more advanced work, but there was a considerable overlap of function at lower levels. The examination system was strengthened from 1921 by the introduction of "National" certificates and diplomas, the highest level of which gave successful candidates complete or partial exemption from the examination requirements of professional bodies in e.g. engineering. There was a considerable wastage of students, through withdrawals or examination failures, but the system was tolerated because it was cheap and interfered little with production.(9)

Between the two established structures of adult education - vocational education and the W.E.A./university field - a third sector was struggling to emerge. Its growth was spearheaded by the interest of women in dressmaking and cookery for domestic rather than employment purposes. There was a growing demand for such subjects before the first world war, as the W.E.A. found when its branches began to develop special programmes for women. The London County Council recognised the importance of non-vocational adult education in 1913 when it set up specialised institutes, some to concentrate on "women's subjects", others to be of a more general nature and include academic courses. Only a few L.E.A.s followed suit during the inter-war years, but there was a considerable growth of provision of craft and other "recreational" classes alongside vocational courses in evening institutes. In England and Wales outside London academic subjects (except for examination courses) were normally left to the universities and the W.E.A.(10)

The modest progress of L.E.A.s in developing non-vocational activities was due in part to the influence of two organisations established in 1921 - the British Institute of Adult Education (now the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education), founded by Albert Mansbridge and Lord Haldane; and the Adult Education Committee of the Board of Education, the first chairman of which was Bishop William Temple, President of the W.E.A. In 1933 the A.E.C. published a survey of L.E.A. adult education which showed clearly that whenever L.E.A.s provided a reasonable stimulus for non-vocational programmes, e.g. by forming evening institute committees or appointing full-time staff, there was a ready response.(11)

Non-vocational adult education in Scotland made slower progress. Although university extension had achieved some success north of the border, the W.E.A. made only a small impact there. Some essential elements of the English experience were missing, notably the sense of guilt about privilege which had influenced attitudes at Oxford. The government did not extend the "responsible body" grant system to Scotland, and apart from a small contribution from university resources, all adult education was the

financial responsibility of the L.E.A.s. The level of provision of both academic and craft/recreational courses was low.

The pace of development of all forms of adult education quickened after 1945. In England and Wales the university departments of adult education and the W.E.A. were enabled by grants from the Ministry of Education (the Board renamed) to appoint additional full-time staff. Whereas before the war most university adult education had been carried on in co-operation with the W.E.A., increasingly the universities went their own way, devoting greater attention to the higher education of the educated. The W.E.A. suffered a crisis of confidence in the early 1950s, which stemmed partly from social changes which it had itself helped to promote. The association's ideal was a working-class student following a demanding course for a social purpose. The reality was more often a middle-class student following a less exacting course for personal satisfaction. After a few years, however, the W.E.A. recovered its sense of purpose, related to education for democracy, and began to expand again. It paid renewed attention to the education of trade unionists, in co-operation with the Education Department of the Trades Union Congress, which in the 1960s took over both the remnants of the Labour College movement and the W.E.A.'s own special machinery for trade union education.(12)

In the field of technical education, full-time and day release courses grew more rapidly than evening provision, and together overtook the latter, in numbers of student-hours, by 1954.

	1937-38		1954-55	
	Students	Student hours (millions)	Students	Student hours (millions)
Full-time	20,000	15.3	64,000	53.2
Part-time day	89,000	10.9	402,000	63.5
Evening	1,094,000	70.1	1,575,000	97.3

From the mid-fifties Britain embarked upon a major expansion of higher and technical education. New universities were established - seven in the years 1958-61 - and the existing ones expanded. Ten leading technical colleges and polytechnics, several of which had begun life as Mechanics' Institutes, were designated as Colleges of Advanced Technology. Within a few years the C.A.T.s became universities or parts of universities. Three of the Scottish "central institutions" followed suit.(13)

There were three further tiers in the L.E.A. sector below the C.A.T.s: Regional Colleges, about twenty-five in number, with a

substantial amount of degree work; Area Colleges; and Local Colleges, doing mainly part-time non-advanced work. As the number of advanced courses, and the proportion of full-time and sandwich students, grew in the Regional and the larger Area Colleges, so did the ambition to follow the C.A.T.s, shed their non-advanced and most of their part-time work, and achieve the prestige, and the greater independence, of university status. This movement, which has been described as "academic drift", faced opposition both from the L.E.A.s which in general wanted to keep control of institutions which they had built up, and the Department of Education and Science (as the Ministry had become in 1964) which believed that higher education could be developed more cheaply in "maintained", i.e. L.E.A.-sector, institutions. These considerations gave rise to the "binary" policy, of which the twin pillars were the Council for National Academic Awards and the "new" polytechnics.(14)

The C.N.A.A., set up in 1964, was empowered to grant degrees (a privilege hitherto confined to universities and a few special institutions) and diplomas. Its role has allowed the University of London to withdraw from the provision of external degrees for college-based courses. Thirty polytechnics (one in Wales, the rest in England) had been designated by 1972. (The six new-style polytechnics in London absorbed five of the older-style London polytechnics; three others had earlier taken the C.A.T. route.) Another polytechnic was established in Northern Ireland. Most of the polytechnics were formed by mergers, between technical colleges (some of them originally Mechanics' Institutes) and art colleges or between several institutions on different sites. The D.E.S. made considerable efforts to transfer advanced work from other technical colleges/colleges of further education to the polytechnics, which were intended to be equal in status to the universities, although concentrating on teaching rather than basic research and on applied rather than "pure" studies.

A "third force" in higher education was created in the mid-seventies. The D.E.S. responded to a fall in the birth rate (832,000 in 1967, just over 600,000 in 1975) and the consequent reduction in the demand for teachers, by forcing through a rapid contraction of the college of education sector. Some colleges were closed, other diversified their provision, but most of the survivors merged with other similar institutions, and/or with colleges of further education. Sixty-three colleges or institutes of higher education have emerged from this process, a very disparate group ranging from near-polytechnics to institutions which have carried over, from the college of further education side, a considerable proportion of non-advanced work. Some colleges have their degrees awarded by a neighbouring university and others have turned to the C.N.A.A.(15)

Between 1960 and 1978 the British higher education system almost trebled in size, to reach 520,000 full-time (including sandwich) students and about 230,000 part-time students. The percentage of the 18-year-old age group going into full-time higher education rose from about 7% in 1961 to about 14% in 1971. It then

levelled off, but absolute numbers continued to rise because of the persistence of a relatively high birth rate until 1964.(16)

The character of the evening institutes, in most of England and Wales, underwent a gradual change in the two decades after the war. They lost most of their examination work, some of it as a result of longer schooling (the leaving age was raised to fifteen in 1947 and to sixteen in 1972, and more children stayed on beyond sixteen) and the remainder through transfer to colleges of further education. The institutes became almost exclusively concerned with the "non-vocational" field, especially domestic arts, creative arts, physical education and languages. Outside London and a few other centres, most of the liberal academic subjects were still left to the universities and the W.E.A.

A label often attached to the L.E.A. non-vocational programmes was "recreational", which proved to be a serious liability during recurrent periods of financial stringency. After a modest post-war expansion, a series of programme cuts and fee increases held student numbers down during the fifties. The following decade, however, saw a considerable expansion. Some L.E.A.s when building new secondary schools included adult wings, and better accommodation has always stimulated the growth of adult education. An even more important stimulus came from the appointment of full-time principals and heads of centre, although by 1968-69 there were still, in England and Wales, only 842 full-time principals, advisers and organisers and 336 full-time teachers, compared with part-time numbers of 1,713 and 76,000 respectively. Enrolments on non-vocational courses (including some students under eighteen) increased from 963,000 in 1961-62 to 1,374,000 in 1966-67 and 1,730,000 in 1973-74.(17)

As part of their post-war development plans, some L.E.A.s had acquired large houses for conversion into short-term residential colleges. The other major organisational innovation in the L.E.A. non-vocational sector derived its inspiration from the "village colleges" established in Cambridgeshire before the second world war. These were multi-purpose institutions, incorporating a secondary school, adult education and other services such as the public library, and were designed to improve the quality of life in rural areas. The idea was later transplanted to urban and suburban settings, under the title "community college" or "community school", bringing together under unified direction a school (usually secondary), a youth centre and the adult education service. By 1978 about a quarter of the L.E.A.s in England and Wales had developed similar institutions or made plans to do so.(18)

The "liberal adult education" provision of the universities and the W.E.A. grew only slowly during the fifties and early sixties, because of restrictions on Ministry/D.E.S. grants, but was allowed to expand more from the mid-sixties. However, many of the university adult education departments developed other forms

of work financed from general university funds or other sources, including social work training, post-experience courses and diploma and higher degree courses in the subject of adult education.(19)

Britain has two long-established systems of "distance teaching", correspondence colleges which prepare students for a wide range of examinations, including external London degrees, and broadcasting. The British Broadcasting Corporation was set up in 1926 to educate, as well as entertain and inform, the community. Apart from its general output, much of which had a considerable educative value, the B.B.C. devised specifically educational programmes. Some broadcasters believed, in the late twenties and early thirties, that radio programmes linked to organised listening groups would supersede the tutor-and-class for much of academic adult education. However, listening groups needed leaders, and experience showed that leaders needed some training and some background knowledge of the subject, which was remarkably like the specification for a tutor. In the end the tutors used the medium, not vice-versa.(20)

In 1969 the two methods of distance teaching were brought together to create the Open University. When the project was first put forward in the early sixties, it was labelled "The University of the Air". In the event, although the B.B.C. broadcasts a substantial number of radio and television programmes on behalf of the O.U., the "Air" has been less important than the carefully-constructed written package, supported by summer schools and local tutorial and counselling support. Students flocked to join the Open University. Once again, a new opportunity offered to adult students had evoked a big response.(21)

The 1960s also saw a radical new departure in government policies for industrial training. Previously, apart from providing some centres for intensive training courses in industrial skills, the government had confined itself to supporting the provision of courses in L.E.A. colleges, and had left employers to decide what use to make of educational facilities. The Industrial Training Act 1964 set up Training Boards for different industries, financed by a levy on the firms concerned. Disappointment with the results of this policy led to the establishment in January 1974 of the powerful Manpower Services Commission, with considerable resources and authority for the promotion of vocational training both within and outside the L.E.A. further education sector.(22)

This brief historical sketch is not intended to provide a comprehensive survey of the development of adult education since the early nineteenth century, but only to explain the antecedents of the present system. Some of the loose ends will be tied up, and omissions rectified, in Chapter IV, but it is impossible, in a short account of the evolution of an educational structure, to do justice either to the social and political context or to the whole host of activities which would be included in a detailed historical survey

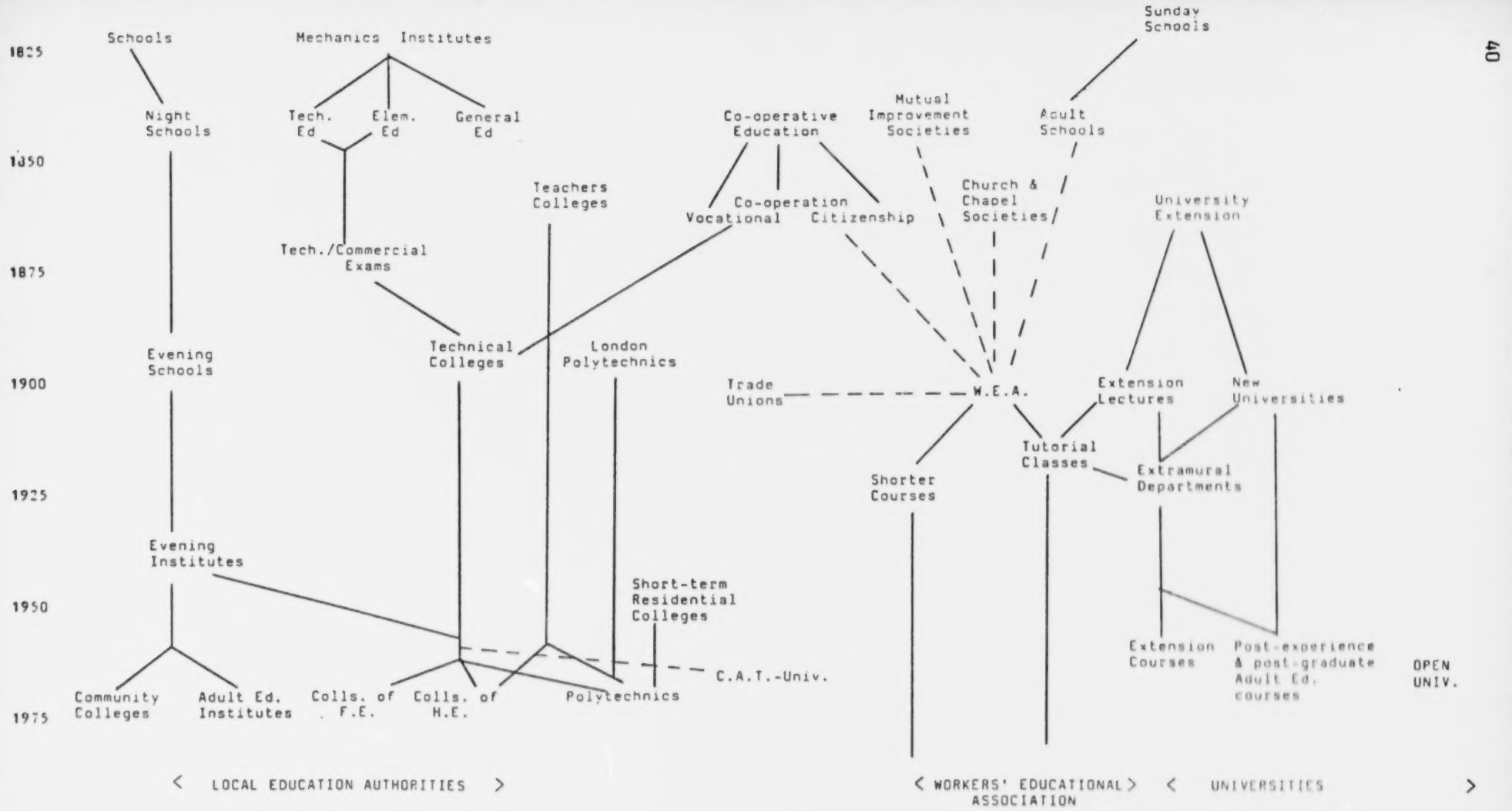

Figure 2 THE EVOLUTION OF ADULT EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES (Ed. = Education; Tech. = Technical; Elem. = Elementary Coll. = College; C.A.T. = College of Advanced Technology; F.E. = Further Education; H.E. = Higher Education)

Note: The chronological alignment is not precise.

of non-formal adult education.

There is room for argument about the relative significance of different developments in adult education during the last 160 years, but any list of movements which have had a decisive influence on the moulding of the modern pattern of adult education would certainly include the following:

The Mechanics' Institute (1820s), the first major nationwide adult education movement and one of the roots of the modern system of vocational adult education.

University extension (1870s), important both for stimulating the growth of new colleges and for involving the universities in adult education beyond the walls.

The development of a system of technical education (1880s and 90s) from which have grown both the modern vocational education structure and its offshoot the evening institute.

The founding of the W.E.A. and the creation of the tutorial class system (1903-08), which made working-class education a major concern of university extramural work and established a voluntary body in a leading role in non-vocational adult education.

The emergence of a strong L.E.A. sector in higher education (1960s), marked by the establishment of the Council for National Academic Awards and the polytechnics.

The Open University (1969).

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Chapter IV Programmes and Policies

1. National machinery and policy determination

The general legal and administrative framework has been described briefly in Chapter II. The public education service in England is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Education and Science, who is a member of the Cabinet. He is assisted by two or three ministers of middle or junior rank - currently two Parliamentary Under-Secretaries, one of whom is normally responsible for adult and higher education. The Department of Education and Science is divided into sections, one of which, Further and Higher Education, deals with universities, polytechnics, L.E.A. colleges and institutes, the W.E.A. and other adult education bodies. In Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, public education is one of the responsibilities of the Secretary of State for the respective country or province. In each case a junior minister operates in effect as education minister, as well as undertaking other duties.

The role of the D.E.S. and its counterparts is very different from that of education ministries in countries with highly centralised systems, although it must be recognised that their appetite for power is growing. The Local Education Authorities, the main providers of adult and post-school education, still have a considerable measure of autonomy. Statutory controls in these areas are weak. The legal obligation of L.E.A.s in respect of children of compulsory school age (5-16) is clear: they must provide sufficient school places. Their responsibility for the education of those over 16 is much vaguer: "to secure the provision ... of adequate facilities". A D.E.S./Welsh Office/L.E.A. working party recommended in its report, **The Legal Basis of Further Education** (1981) that L.E.A.s should be required to offer places in either schools or colleges of further education for all 16-19 year-olds who wanted them, but could not agree whether the duty to provide for the over-19s should be made more precise. No legislative action has yet been taken.(1)

The financial basis of local government has been described in Chapter II. The local autonomy which the Rate Support Grant system was designed to protect has been marginally infringed by the withholding of funds to be disbursed by the D.E.S. as special grants, and seriously eroded by the decision of the government to transfer one quarter of the funding of work-related non-advanced further education to the Manpower Services Commission (see page 12). The government has other financial weapons to hand, including control over major items of capital expenditure and over the size and distribution of the advanced further education pool (see page 14).

The most extensive and clearly-defined D.E.S. powers are found in two areas. First, the Department controls the allocation of teacher training places, and has used this power to close some colleges and force others to merge. Secondly the bodies which receive direct

grant from the D.E.S. and its counterparts, e.g. the Open University, the university departments of adult education, the W.E.A. and the long-term residential colleges, are in a sense at the mercy of governmental financial decisions from year to year, although until recently funding was relatively stable. The D.E.S. lays down the conditions for the receipt and expenditure of grant by bodies such as the W.E.A. in regulations, the most recent of which are incorporated in the Education (Grant) Regulations 1983.

The L.E.A. further education sector has a regional tier, composed of nine Regional Advisory Councils in England and the Welsh Joint Education Committee. These bodies, which are financed by the constituent L.E.A.s, were set up to co-ordinate regional provision. They also recommend fee levels for non-advanced courses, and are involved in training and in some cases examining. The councils and their committees include members from industry, the universities and other organisations, but policy control is firmly in the hands of the L.E.A.s.(2)

The R.A.C.s have delegated authority from the D.E.S. to approve part-time courses, which obviously cater for local and regional needs. Full-time courses, which have a national as well as a regional or local market, are subject to more elaborate controls. They are considered by both the R.A.C. and the D.E.S.'s Regional Staff Inspector, with the final decision being taken by the D.E.S.

The Regional Staff Inspectors are part of a team of H.M.I.s - Her Majesty's Inspectors - who inspect and advise on the further and higher education provision of L.E.A.s and the programmes of bodies such as the W.E.A. which are in receipt of direct D.E.S. grant. Occasionally the heads of university adult education departments have expressed resentment at the power of H.M.I.s to visit their grant-aided classes, because other university departments do not have to submit to this process. Normally, however, the H.M.I.s dealing with the universities and the W.E.A. are looked upon as friends and colleagues who not only offer useful advice but can also be relied upon to ensure that the needs and problems of the Responsible Bodies are understood within the D.E.S. The H.M.I.s collectively organise training courses for adult educators and others in the education service. No tuition fees are charged, but employers are expected to meet the costs of travel and subsistence.

In 1982 a powerful new body came into existence in England, the National Advisory Body for Local Authority Higher Education, which advises the Secretary of State for Education and Science on the provision of public sector higher education in 29 polytechnics and over 300 other colleges. There is a parallel Welsh Advisory Board. N.A.B. has three tiers: the **committee**, chaired by the minister responsible for higher education; the **board**, currently chaired by Christopher Ball, Warden of Keble College, Oxford; and a series of **groups**, e.g. an engineering group, an art and design group, and four "transbinary" groups, i.e. with members drawn from the universities as

well, dealing with agriculture, architecture, continuing education and librarianship and information studies.

On 1 February 1985 the area of responsibility of N.A.B. was extended to include the voluntary colleges of higher education, and the name was changed to the National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education.

The **committee** has eight members: the minister, Mr. Ball, and six people nominated by local authority associations. The **board** includes D.E.S. officials and H.M.I.s, representatives of professional associations concerned with polytechnics and colleges (including voluntary colleges), and members drawn from L.E.A.s, industry, the Trades Union Congress, the Business and Technician Examination Council and the Council for National Academic Awards. The **groups**, which consist mainly of specialists in the subject area concerned, advise the board, which makes recommendations to the committee, which in turn advises the Secretary of State.

N.A.B. now deals with the allocation of the advanced further education pool (see page 14) and through its control of the major source of finance for public sector higher education has already begun a process of rationalising provision by closing some courses. The D.E.S. has placed an embargo on the approval of new publicly-financed full-time courses, unless it can be shown that they are needed to meet employment demands, particularly in the fields of science and technology. Any new developments will take place within a framework approved by N.A.B., which will in turn be influenced by the declared policy of the Secretary of State to achieve "a significant shift of provision towards science, engineering and other vocational studies". (3)

Although L.E.A. representatives are in a majority on the N.A.B. committee, the D.E.S. control over pool allocations and course approval, reinforced by the role of one of the education ministers as chairman of the committee, puts considerable directive powers in the hands of the Secretary of State. He has, by contrast, a more distant relationship with policy making in the university sector. The universities are heavily dependent upon funds provided by the D.E.S., but the allocations to individual universities are made by the University Grants Committee. The U.G.C. members are appointed by the Secretary of State, but a majority come from the university sector. The Committee was established in 1919 as a channel for public funding, which would prevent detailed government interference in the working of universities. The Secretary of State has, however, two powerful financial levers with which to influence, and to some degree to control, the direction of university development. First, if the U.G.C. is unresponsive to government wishes the total U.G.C. grant can be cut. Secondly, the practice already adopted (see above pp 18-19) of combining reductions in general funding with new earmarked allocations could be extended.

In 1982-83 the Secretary of State asked the U.G.C. and N.A.B. to put forward advice about the future pattern of higher education. After extensive consultations they made separate submissions together with a joint statement in September 1984. The latter began by reciting the four objectives of the higher education system as defined by the Robbins Report on Higher Education (1963): instruction in skills; intellectual development; the advancement of learning; and the transmission of a common culture and common standards of citizenship. The statement argued that, because of the speed of technical and social change, "the recent increased emphasis on continuing education must be maintained and accelerated". An objective additional to the Robbins quartet was suggested: "The provision of continuing education in order to facilitate adjustment to technological, economic and social change and to meet individual needs for personal development". The joint statement referred to "adjustment to ... social change" not to equipping people to change society. Current views on the aims of adult/continuing education are mentioned in several of the sections below.

The Secretary of State will respond to the U.G.C. and N.A.B. advice in an official paper, expected to be published by the summer of 1985, which may take the form of either a discussion document or a set of firm proposals.

In Northern Ireland both universities and colleges are funded directly by the Department of Education of Northern Ireland. The merger of the Ulster Polytechnic with the New University of Ulster to form the University of Ulster has already been mentioned (page 17). The Welsh system of government administration and policy control is similar to the English, and there are no signs as yet that policy and practice in the two countries are going to diverge significantly.

The Scottish Education Department does not finance the eight Scottish universities except through the payment of tuition fees and student grants, as the D.E.S./U.G.C. system covers the whole of the United Kingdom except Northern Ireland. The S.E.D. directly funds eleven Central Institutions, soon to be thirteen with the transfer from local authority control of Glasgow and Napier (Edinburgh) Colleges of Technology, and seven colleges of education. Both student quotas and staff numbers in these institutions are determined by S.E.D. The Scottish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries maintains three agricultural colleges. The remaining institutions of further and adult education are the responsibility of the local authorities.

In June 1984 the Scottish Tertiary Education Advisory Council was established to review the whole of Scottish higher/further education, including the role of the local authority colleges.

The Robbins Report on Higher Education, mentioned above, is an example of a favourite British method of policy formulation, the

appointment of a committee to investigate a particular area or problem and make recommendations. There is no guarantee that the latter will be implemented, particularly if the government in power has changed, or the national economic situation has deteriorated, between the appointment of the committee and the appearance of its report. The government followed the recommendations of the Robbins Committee by expanding higher education, converting the Colleges of Advanced Technology into universities and setting up the Council for National Academic Awards but deviated from Robbins by adopting the binary policy instead of concentrating the expansion of higher education in the universities (see pages 37-38). The report of the Haslegrave Committee on Technical Colleges and Examinations (1969) led eventually to the establishment of the Technician Education Council and the Business Education Council (see section 2 below).

The Russell Committee on non-vocational adult education in England and Wales was set up in 1969 and reported in 1973. The report did not propose any major structural changes, but made a large number of recommendations about identifying and meeting needs, the implementation of which would have required a doubling of the budget for non-vocational adult education. This was a more modest demand than it might seem, as the sector's share of the total local authority education budget was calculated to be only 1%. The Russell Report had a considerable influence on the adult education field, and some of its proposals have led to increases in public funding, including the adult literacy programme (section 5) and the grants made to the Trade Union Congress for educational purposes (section 9), although in both cases other influences were at work. However the doubling of the 1969-73 resources base is further away than ever. The estimated share of the L.E.A. education budget in 1983-84 was 0.6%.

The parallel Alexander Report on Scottish adult education (1975) recommended the merger of the local authority non-vocational adult education service, then poorly staffed in most of the country, with the better provided youth and community service. The proposal was adopted, but other recommendations requiring increased public expenditure have fared no better than in England.

One of the proposals of the Russell Committee was the creation of a National Development Council for Adult Education in England and Wales. The government was unwilling to accept the resource implications of the word "development", but set up instead an Advisory Council on Adult and Continuing Education for England and Wales. Similar bodies were established in Scotland (the Community Education Council) and Northern Ireland (the Council for Continuing Education). A.C.A.C.E began work in 1977, for an initial three-year term subsequently extended to 1983. The Council had a rather similar composition and role to the Adult Education Committee of the Board of Education (1921-39), but was much more industrious, producing in its six years of existence a substantial number of useful reports and discussion papers.

In February, 1983 A.C.A.C.E. put forward **The Case for a National Development Body for Continuing Education in England and Wales.** The new body would begin the process of translating into practice the ideas generated and collected in the advisory stage, and an annual budget of £1,750,000 was suggested. The government declined the invitation, and decided instead to fund a Development Unit as part of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. U.D.A.C.E., to give the unit's acronym, will undertake a small number of development projects at any one time, and is likely to have a budget of about £200,000 a year. (5)

The National Institute is the most important channel for consultation and information in the field of non-vocational and general adult education in England and Wales. Founded in 1921 as the British Institute of Adult Education, it was reconstructed with the title National Institute in 1949, and recently added the word "Continuing" to its name to adjust to changes in current nomenclature and to reflect a gradual broadening of its role. N.I.A.C.E. is supported financially by all the L.E.A.s jointly and by the D.E.S. as well as having corporate (e.g. universities) and individual members. Its Council is representative not only of the D.E.S., L.E.A.s, universities and W.E.A. but also of many other bodies interested in adult education e.g. the Trades Union Congress, the national organisations of the Women's Institutes and Townswomen's Guilds and the Library Association. The annual conference of N.I.A.C.E. is the most widely representative of all adult education gatherings. The Institute publishes three regular journals (**Studies in the Education of Adults**, **Adult Education** and **Teaching Adults**), a **Year Book of Adult Continuing Education**, and a steady stream of monographs, some of which are the products of research projects carried out by the Institute. The latter include A. H. Charnley, **Paid Educational Leave** (1975) and H. A. Jones and A. H. Charnley, **Adult Literacy: A Study of Its Impact** (1979).

N.I.A.C.E. is an active partner in the European Bureau of Adult Education and the International Council for Adult Education, and maintains contact with U.N.E.S.C.O., the European Centre for Leisure and Education and other international and overseas bodies. As evidence of its central role, the Adult Literacy Resource Agency and its successors (see section 5) and A.C.A.C.E. have been attached to N.I.A.C.E. The Scottish Institute of Adult Education carries out some of the same functions, although on a much smaller scale, including conferences, a journal and other occasional publications.

In 1977 the D.E.S. established the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit, the title of which summarises its functions. At the beginning of 1983 it was renamed the Further Education Unit and reconstituted as a limited company funded by the D.E.S., with a board of management drawn from local authority organisations, professional associations in further education, the M.S.C., the D.E.S., the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress. The 1982-83 budget was doubled for the year 1983-84 and raised again, to about £2,000,000, for 1984-85.

The objects of the F.E.U. are: to review existing further education programmes and identify duplication and deficiencies; to determine priorities and methods of improvement; to make or support studies of further education curricula, and promote experiment and its evaluation; and to disseminate relevant information. The Unit is an advisory body to the D.E.S. and other government departments of education, but is also likely to have a major direct influence on the further education sector through the publication of its project reports, which are distributed free of charge. By March 1984 over 200 projects were in progress or already completed.(6)

The F.E.U. has also taken administrative responsibility for PICKUP, the Professional, Industrial and Commercial Updating Programme launched by the D.E.S. As PICKUP courses, on for example new industrial techniques, should be of economic benefit to industry and commerce, the D.E.S. does not intend to provide regular grant-aid, but will confine its role to maintaining an advisory service and pump-priming grants for selected developments. A national coordinator, and nine regional development agents attached to Regional Advisory Councils, have been appointed. The D.E.S. provided £266,000 for PICKUP in 1983-84, in addition to the main F.E.U. budget, and in July 1984 offered to L.E.A.s grants totalling £2,000,000 for research, development and marketing activities.(7) Another source of funding for some PICKUP initiatives is the Manpower Services Commission.

The F.E.U. is also administering part of the fund of £1,000,000 a year for special projects with the unemployed, created by reducing the grant to the Responsible Bodies by a similar amount. The rest of the money is being administered by N.I.A.C.E. The D.E.S. has followed the PICKUP model to some degree, by deciding that a substantial part of the special fund will be used for the employment of regional officers to encourage educational work with the unemployed and disseminate information about good practice. This scheme is labelled R.E.P.L.A.N.

It is understood that the D.E.S. strengthened the F.E.U. partly for the purpose of resisting the encroachment of the M.S.C., which threatened to take control of the curriculum for the 16-19 age group through its massive Youth Training Scheme (see section 3). In his foreword to the Unit's annual report for 1983-84 the chairman of the F.E.U. questioned some of the cherished curricular notions of the M.S.C. but declared that further education would retain its identity "only if it renews itself through curricular development, through systematic staff re-training and through heightening of its customary level of responsiveness." The government has, however, shown scant faith in the current level of "responsiveness" of the colleges of further education by transferring a quarter of the funding of work-related non-advanced further education to the M.S.C.

It is difficult to evaluate current trends in government policy because several of them are of relatively recent origin, and could be reversed, checked or accelerated in the near future. Some of the policies are rooted in a political paradox. The present government

is ideologically committed to limiting the role of the state in national life, for which purpose it wants to cut public expenditure and taxation, to which end it is increasing the power of central government in some fields, e.g. the control of local authority expenditure or rate levels. Consistently with its philosophy the government would like to see more of the cost of adult education borne by the consumer-employers in the case of PICKUP and other refresher/updating provision in the vocational area, the students (except for the disadvantaged) in the case of non-vocational courses. An education minister told a N.I.A.C.E. conference in November 1983 that adult education "is undervalued because it is underpriced".

The government, through the education departments and the M.S.C., is showing a preference for short-term funding (which normally means short-term appointments) over long-term arrangements, and for more specific grants (e.g. for experimental projects or pump-priming) and less general-purpose funding. When this policy trend is examined in detail, it becomes clear that it cannot be explained entirely by reference to the limitation of public expenditure. The government has become impatient with its traditional role of offering only selective guidance to a decentralised system and has decided that in several important areas it knows best, that it has the right and duty to be more interventionist in directing educational policy in what it conceives to be the national interest.

Adult educators in the field - the toad under the harrow - now have to deal with a situation in which their general and regular funding is reduced, but by way of partial compensation they can bid for short-term grants for special purposes - not only from the D.E.S. or M.S.C. but also from other sources such as the Department of the Environment or the Social Fund of the European Economic Community. The opportunity costs of applying for and managing such grants can be considerable; short-term appointments create personnel problems, particularly where the turnover of regular staff is so low that the prospects of a conversion to a full-time appointment are poor; and successful projects can be sustained beyond the one, two or at the most three years of temporary funding only by making them an additional charge on the diminished general resources.

2 The L.E.A. Vocational Sector

The L.E.A. colleges and polytechnics are concerned mainly with courses leading to examinations, which are classified administratively as vocational, and with other programmes, e.g. in-service training for teachers and industrial refresher courses of an avowedly vocational character. Their contribution to non-vocational adult education will be considered in section 4.

The institutions in this sector for England and Wales are: (a) 30 polytechnics; (b) 63 colleges of higher education; (c) over 600 colleges of further education. Category (b) includes some voluntary colleges, managed by religious bodies and directly grant-aided by the D.E.S. These are former monotechnic colleges of teacher education or institutions created by mergers of the latter. They are effectively part of "public sector higher education", i.e. higher education outside the universities, and have recently come within the jurisdiction (for England) of the National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education.

The provision of this sector is divided into **advanced** courses, that is, those leading to a qualification beyond G.C.E. A-level or Ordinary National Diploma and certain non-examined courses of a comparable academic standing, and **non-advanced** courses. Advanced courses are financed through the pooling system (see pp 13-14), and are the concern of N.A.B. in England and W.A.B. in Wales.

The administrative separation of England and Wales has created some problems in relation to the harmonisation of factual information. For this reason, the remainder of this section, unless otherwise stated, refers to England only. (8)

In 1983-84, 403,000 students were enrolled on advanced courses, well over half of whom fell within the definition of "adult student" used in this book, i.e. part-time students over 18 years of age and full-time mature students (defined in England as being aged 21 or over at the commencement of their courses). 43% of the total were part-time. Just over half were 21 or over, and over a quarter were 25 or over, on entry. Taking full-time (including sandwich) students separately, over a third were over 21 on entry, compared with 9.2% for the English universities. This represents a major contribution to the education of adults. It should be remembered that "second chance" adult students going into full-time higher education, as well as the normal 18-19 year old entrants, are entitled to maintenance grants and the payment of fees. However, the maintenance grant is less than a quarter of average industrial earnings, so that a considerable sacrifice is required from anyone who has been in reasonably well-paid employment, quite apart from the hazards of giving up a secure job at a time of large-scale unemployment. Some trends in

provision are shown in the following table:

Advanced course enrolments

(each figure rounded to the nearest 1,000)

	Colleges and Polytechnics			Polytechnics only
	1973-74	1979-80	1983-84	1983-84
Full-time and sandwich				
Initial teacher training	107,000	33,000	24,000	7,000
In-service training	-	2,000	2,000	1,000
Others	94,000	149,000	204,000	140,000
Sub-total	200,000	184,000	230,000	148,000
Part-time	104,000	149,000	172,000	68,000
TOTAL	304,000	333,000	403,000	216,000

Between 1973-74 and 1983-84, the number of students in initial teacher training fell by nearly 78%, most of the decline taking place in the mid-seventies. In the same period other full-time enrolments rose by 114%, and part-time numbers by 61%.

In 1983 the 29 English polytechnics had 64% of the full-time advanced enrolments but only 39% of the part-time students. The remaining provision was divided, roughly equally, between about 300 colleges, the majority of whose work is non-advanced; and about 30 major colleges, a few of which are similar in role to the polytechnics. For example, in the largest of the non-polytechnic colleges, Humberside College of Higher Education, over 80% of the work is advanced.

Since the polytechnics were designated the percentage of part-time students has declined from about 60% in 1969 to 41% in 1976, and 35% in 1983-84. This shift has been criticised as part of the process of "academic drift" by which the polytechnics move closer to the universities in their academic structure and in the social composition of their student body. The polytechnics argue, however, that the main cause is a shift in student demand, as more professional bodies opt for full-time training. Part-time numbers in polytechnics have varied very little during the last six years, while full-time numbers have increased.

An important feature of public sector higher education, as compared with the universities, is the extensive provision of courses

leading to qualifications below degree level, e.g. Diploma in Higher Education, Higher National Diploma, Diploma and Certificate awards of the Business and Technician Education Council, and a wide range of specialist professional qualifications. It should be noted, however, that some of the students go on to complete degree courses, receiving credit for their diploma study.

The main categories of provision in 1983-84, expressed as a percentage of student enrolments, were: (figures to the nearest whole number)

	Full-time and Sandwich	Part-time	All Students
Teacher training	%	%	%
Postgraduate	2	-	1
B.Ed. and similar	9	1	5
In-service	1	10	5
Non-teacher training			
Postgraduate	3	7	5
First degree	57	8	37
Dip. H.E., H.N.D., H.N.C., B.T.E.C.	18	34	25
Others	10	40	23

The D.E.S. statistics quoted in this section relate to enrolments effective in November of each year. This system of counting is reliable enough for advanced courses, which normally occupy the whole of an academic year, but misses out students on courses starting after Christmas and most of those attending short refresher courses and similar forms of provision. This limitation should be borne in mind when considering Non-Advanced Further Education (N.A.F.E.).

The age-structure of N.A.F.E. students is very different from that of advanced students, hardly any of whom are under the age of 18. The details for November 1983 are:

	NUMBERS	% under 18	% under 19	% over 25
Full-time and sandwich	343,698	67	81.2	6.6
Part-time day or day and evening	599,608	32.6	45.5	33.9
Part-time evening only	635,043	10.4	15.7	63.6
TOTAL	1,578,349	31.1	41.3	39.9

The distribution of enrolments between types of course is as follows:

	Full-time and sandwich	Part-time day or day and evening	Part-time evening only	TOTALS
O.N.D./O.N.C.	4,888	316	3	5,207
B.T.E.C.	75,914	105,822	14,609	196,345
CITY AND GUILDS	59,980	188,626	41,172	289,778
G.C.E. A-LEVELS	58,163	25,816	53,477	137,456
G.C.E. O-LEVELS	29,540	30,820	98,972	159,332
Professional qualifications	44,294	32,780	64,335	141,409
College certificates and diplomas	14,105	2,231	1,458	17,794
Other Courses	56,814	213,197	361,017	631,028
TOTALS	343,698	599,608	635,043	1,578,349

O.N.D./O.N.C. = Ordinary National Diploma/Certificate

B.T.E.C. = Qualifications of the Business and Technician Education Council

Sandwich courses involve alternating periods of study and work experience.

19,000 of the above full-time students come from outside Britain and the European Economic Community.

In one of the above tables the proportions of the under-19s are indicated because further education policy now focusses on the "16s to 19s" as a distinct group. (9) N.A.F.E. full-time students, and part-time day attenders on the City and Guilds and B.T.E.C. courses (most of whom are given paid release from employment), are predominantly adolescents and young adults. By contrast, nearly two-thirds of the "evening-only" students are over 25, their concentration being greatest in the category "other courses". The latter includes a wide range of non-examination courses, many of which fall within the "non-vocational" area described in section 4; courses provided for the Manpower Services Commission (see section 3); day-release courses for trade union representatives (section 9); and short refresher and updating courses for industry and commerce.

The N.A.F.E. examinations fall into four main groups. The City and Guilds of London Institute is the principal examining body for craft courses, in addition to offering a wide variety of other qualifications. General Certificate of Education O and A level courses had nearly 300,000 enrolments in 1983-84. The students include young people using a college of further education as an alternative to the sixth form, and adults of varying ages taking an O and A level course to satisfy an interest in a particular subject without necessarily having any vocational motivation.

The Business Education Council and Technician Education Council were set up in 1973-74 as part of a plan to develop in England and Wales a unified national system of qualifications for technicians and for business and public administration below the level dealt with by the Council for National Academic Awards. The B.E.C. and T.E.C. validation/examination machinery has gradually replaced most of the O.N.D./O.N.C. schemes, and has taken over technician-level courses from the City and Guilds Institute. Parallel bodies, S.C.O.T.E.C. and S.C.O.T.B.E.C., were established in Scotland in 1973-74, with similar functions. B.E.C. and T.E.C. merged in 1983 to form the Business and Technician Education Council. (10)

The fourth main category of examinations is those administered by professional bodies in, for example, accountancy or catering.

In advanced further education (public sector higher education), the main examination groups for non-degree work are B.T.E.C. (89,206 enrolments) and professional bodies (75,706), with Higher National Diploma enrolments having declined from 42,523 in 1978 to 9,562 in 1983, as the B.T.E.C. system has developed. For first degrees other than teacher training, 90% of the provision is validated by the C.N.A.A., with university validation, favoured by a minority of colleges of higher education, accounting for the other 10%.

Of the three categories of public sector institution, the **polytechnics** are the most homogeneous. They have only a small percentage of non-advanced work, some of it non-vocational. The **colleges of higher education** include near-polytechnics, diversified former colleges of

education, and colleges which despite their label have a preponderance of non-advanced enrolments. The **colleges of further education** are concerned predominantly with non-advanced work. These varied patterns are illustrated by the tables below, compiled from the November 1983 statistical return.

The Cambridgeshire and Gloucestershire Colleges are chosen as representative of large colleges of higher education which have a substantial number of non-advanced enrolments. The marked contrast in profile between Humberside College of Higher Education (which has its main campus in Hull) and Hull College of Further Education is the product of a reorganisation in the 1970s which created a college of HE and a college of FE out of six public sector colleges in the city of Hull.

To give a true picture of the balance between different categories of provision, it would be necessary to convert all the varied part-time work into full-time equivalents. The information required for this purpose is not readily available, and therefore full-time and part-time figures are given separately. As already mentioned, the D.E.S. statistics under-record terminal and short courses. There are probably about 100,000 students in England alone attending public-sector post-experience vocational courses of short duration, few of whom are included in the November statistical returns.

The curriculum of a large college of further education is of bewildering variety. There are some local specialisms reflecting the character of the local economy, e.g. hotel and catering studies in a holiday resort, or food science in an area with food processing factories. A wide range of secretarial, commercial, technical and general courses can, however, be found in any large college. The main business of the college of further education is to prepare people for careers, usually via an examination.

During the last few years there have been some interesting experiments in flexible learning systems, some consisting of modular programmes for adults which can be built up into alternatives to A-levels for entry to higher education; and others involving combinations of tuition in college and home study, sometimes using distance-learning packages. Some of the schemes tie in with the Open Tech project, described in section 3.

The colleges have become increasingly involved in the provision of courses for the M.S.C., mainly as part of the Youth Training Scheme. This work creates significant organisational problems. Negotiating the contracts can be expensive in management and staff time. The funding is short-term, as a result of which many of the teaching staff are on short-term contracts. The M.S.C. courses and students may sit uneasily alongside the mainstream provision of the college. Sometimes they are located in a separate building (e.g. a redundant school turned into a college annexe) with separate staff. The transfer of a quarter of the

29 ENGLISH POLYTECHNICS - ENROLMENTS

	Post-graduate	First Degree	Other Advanced	Total Advanced	Non-Advanced	All Courses	% of Advanced	% of Degrees and postgraduate
Full-time and sandwich	4,797	108,543	34,746	148,086	3,139	151,225	97.9	74.9
Part-time Day or Day and Evening	6,298	8,449	33,483	48,230	5,848	54,078	89.2	27.3
Part-time Evening Only	2,998	5,269	9,875	18,142	8,494	26,636	68.1	31
TOTALS	14,093	122,261	78,104	214,458	17,481	231,939	92.5	58.8

		ADVANCED				NON ADVANCKD	ALL ENROLMENTS	% OF ENROLMENTS POST-GRADUATE AND FIRST DEGREE	% OF ENROLMENTS ADVANCED
		Post-graduate	First degree	Other Advanced	All Advanced				
Cambridgeshire	FT	20	841	206	1067	1155	2222	38.7	48
College of Arts	PT	35	53	768	856	3088	3944	2.8	21.7
and Technology	Totals	55	894	974	1923	4243	6166	15.4	31.2
Gloucestershire	FT	68	325	783	1176	2133	3309	11.9	35.5
College of Arts	PT	63	3	1297	1453	7044	8497	0.8	17.1
and Technology	Totals	131	328	2080	2629	9177	11806	3.9	22.3
Humberside	FT	65	1425	1176	2666	505	3171	47	84.1
College of	PT	70	545	1416	2031	437	2468	24.9	82.3
Higher Education	Totals	135	1970	2592	4697	942	5639	37.3	83.3
Hull College of	FT	-	-	-	-	1469	1469	-	-
Further Education	PT	-	-	49	49	6690	6739	-	0.7
	Totals	-	-	49	49	8159	8208	-	0.6

funding of non-advanced work-related further education from the Rate Support Grant to the M.S.C. is likely to have important consequences for policy and organisation within the colleges.

The total enrolment on vocational further education courses in Scotland in 1982-83 was 171,500. Over the previous decade the colleges experienced a decline of a quarter in part-time enrolments, mainly due to the virtual extinction of the apprenticeship system through the closure of large-scale industrial enterprises which had traditionally sent young workers on day-release courses. By way of compensation the proportion of full-time students increased, from 8% of the total in 1973-74 to 21% in 1982-83, when about 33,000 students were enrolled on advanced S.C.O.T.E.C./S.C.O.T.B.E.C./H.N.D. courses. Student numbers in the Central Institutions rose during the same period by 45%, most of this increase being accounted for by enrolments on full-time advanced courses, which exceeded 14,000 in 1982-83. (11)

Finally, a cautionary word is needed about the relationship between the definition of adult education used in this book and the FE colleges' perception of their own role. They have four categories of student:

(a) Full-time students continuing their education without a break after school.

(b) Part-time students under 18.

(c) Full-time students over 18 resuming their education after some work experience.

(d) Part-time students over 18.

Categories (c) and (d) fall within our definition of adult students, (a) and (b) are outside it. The colleges themselves would not lay much stress on this distinction between "adult" and "non-adult", which does not correspond with the major administrative divisions which concern them, into advanced, non-advanced and non-vocational work. The staff of the colleges generally recognize the distinctive characteristics of the older, more mature adult, but would probably draw their line between youth and maturity at about the age of completion of normal, full-time tertiary education, i.e. about 21 or 22.

3 Occupational Training and the Manpower Services Commission

The historical background to the recent legislation on industrial training has been sketched out in Chapter III. In the nineteen fifties and early sixties there was a growing conviction that the longstanding deficiencies in industrial training had damaged the competitiveness of British industry. Even during recessions there were shortages of certain types of skilled worker. In contrast to some countries in continental Europe, where the government assumed the responsibility for the basic vocational training of young people, the primary responsibility for this in Britain rested with the employer, making such use as he wished of the colleges of further education. Some firms had excellent training facilities. The British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education (founded 1919) had done valuable educative work with and for employers. It was widely believed, however, that many employers would never stir themselves to make an adequate investment in training, preferring to recruit as required workers trained elsewhere - the "poach, not train" philosophy. (12)

These considerations led to the passing of the 1964 Industrial Training Act. Industrial Training Boards were established for different industries - twenty-three to cover England, Wales and Scotland and nine in Northern Ireland. The I.T.B.s collected from firms (except the very small ones) a levy based on the size of the labour force. The money was used to finance training programmes for firms or groups of firms in the same industry; and also to explore new training methods and to assist in training the trainers. As the employers expanded their training programmes to match the size of their levy, nearly all the money (less the operating costs of the I.T.B.s) found its way back to where it came from. The question then arose - could industry now be trusted to maintain the same level of training without the I.T.B.s, in which case the latter could be abolished or maintained on a small scale as training resource agencies? At the same time legal arguments arose about the range of occupations to which the Industrial Training Act applied.

The government's response was the 1973 Employment and Training Act, which set up the Manpower Services Commission and modified the operation of the I.T.B.s. Firms with adequate training programmes were now exempt from the levy. The government, through the M.S.C. (and the Department of Manpower Services in Northern Ireland) paid the operating costs of the I.T.B.s and also financed some innovatory training projects.(13)

Although the 1973 Act was the work of a Conservative government, the provisions relating to Industrial Training Boards were drastically altered after the party returned to power in 1979, pledged to remove restrictions from industry. As a result of the 1981 Employment and Training Act, the responsibility for the operating costs of the I.T.B.s was transferred from the government to the industries concerned and in 1982 sixteen I.T.B.s were abolished. Some voluntary training organisations have been created to fill the vacuum. In 1981-82 the operating costs carried on the M.S.C. budget were £48,500,000, with a

further £57,000,000 paid to the I.T.B.s in training grants. (14) The Manpower Services Commission itself has ten members appointed by the government: a chairman; three members chosen after consultation with the Confederation of British Industry; three after consultation with the Trades Union Congress; two drawn from local authority associations; and one appointed after consultation with professional interests. There are also M.S.C. committees for Wales and Scotland. The M.S.C. has a high degree of operational autonomy, but its mission is to implement broadly-formulated government policies, and the government holds the purse strings. Its activities have been dominated by the need to combat the massive rise in unemployment since 1979, described in Chapter I.

The M.S.C. has two main operational divisions: **Employment**, which runs Job Centres and other employment-finding agencies, and administers various employment-creation schemes; and **Training**, one section of which is concerned with youth training, and the other with occupational training, including the Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS), the main programme for unemployed adults. TOPS courses cover specific employment skills; training for people wanting to set up their own business; and "work preparation" for those lacking the necessary basic skills to compete in the shrinking labour market.

A separate Skillcentre Training Agency was established within the M.S.C. on 1 April 1983 to administer eighty-seven skillcentres and annexes. These training centres were developed by the government on a small-scale in the 1920s, and have normally provided six-months full-time courses in manual craft skills. The S.T.A. has now begun to shift the emphasis towards new technologies. It is intended that by 1986-87 the agency will recover all of its costs from fees, including those paid by the M.S.C. Training Division, which provided 91% of the S.T.A. business in 1983-84. The new commercial approach has resulted in a decision, early in 1985, to close 29 of the centres/annexes.

Trends in TOPS and skillcentre programmes are shown below.

NUMBERS OF TRAINEES COMPLETING TOPS COURSES

(England, Wales and Scotland)

	1980-81	1983-84
Skillcentres	23,500	24,700
Colleges of FE) Private Colleges)	32,800	33,200
Employers' establishments	9,600	7,500
Residential training centres	600	800
	66,400	66,200

including	1980-81	1983-84
Clerical and commercial	19,700	12,300
Business training	400	2,500
Technician and computer	7,000	7,200
Work preparation	5,900	14,100

About 30% of TOPS trainees in 1983-84 were women, 550 of them taking "Wider Opportunities" courses designed for women wishing to return to employment after a long break. (15)

The development of a new manpower and training strategy began with the publication by the M.S.C. in May 1981, with the endorsement of the government, of a consultative document **A New Training Initiative.** This had three main objectives:

(a) to develop skill training including apprenticeship in such a way as to enable individuals ... to acquire agreed standards of skill appropriate to the jobs available and to provide them with a basis for progression through further learning;

(b) to move towards a position where all young people under the age of 18 have the opportunity either of continuing in full-time education or of entering a period of planned work experience combining work-related training and education; and

(c) to open up widespread opportunities for adults, whether employed, unemployed or returning to work, to acquire, increase or update their skills and knowledge during the course of their working lives. (16)

To meet objectives (a) and (b), the Youth Training Scheme was launched in April 1983, coming into full operation towards the end of the year. It aims to provide young people with a bridge between school and work through a year-long period of high quality training and work experience, including a minimum of 13 weeks' off-the-job training in further education. The training is also intended to provide a foundation of skills which can be built on later on in working life and whenever possible includes training in the uses of new technology. (17)

About two-thirds of the Y.T.S. schemes were provided by employers and other private sector organisations, and about one third by public and voluntary bodies, including colleges of futher education. The M.S.C. planned to provide 460,000 places, but in the event just over 350,000 were filled. Unemployed young people on the Y.T.S. in 1983-85

received a weekly allowance of £25 and some assistance with travel costs. They did not, of course, receive unemployment benefit at the same time. (18)

The M.S.C.s New Training Initiative is an attempt to deal with both a recent problem and a longstanding one. The former is mass youth unemployment: but for special government schemes, well over half of all 16-year-old school leavers would have been unemployed in 1984. The second, much older problem is the inadequacy of post-16 education and training. When Y.T.S. was launched only about half of young people in Britain received any systematic vocational training or post-16 education, compared with over 90% in West Germany and over 80% in France. For those leaving school at 16, the position had worsened during the previous fifteen years. The number of apprenticeships in manufacturing industry fell from 236,000 in 1968 to under 150,000 in 1980 and about 100,000 in 1982, while the number of workers in the same industries receiving any other kind of specific training declined from 210,000 in 1968 to 90,000 in 1980, and has fallen further (Y.T.S. excepted) since then. (19)

The M.S.C. turned its attention to the third objective of the New Training Initiative by publishing in April 1983 a discussion paper **Towards an Adult Training Strategy.** The introduction to the paper declared,

> ... Britain needs a flexible, adaptable workforce to survive change and uncertainty in an increasingly competitive world ... Today's young people cannot hope to train once for a lifetime of work ... There is an urgent need to increase awareness of the necessity for learning to be a continuing process, for people of all ages ...

In discussing labour market needs, the paper argued that

> Our present system of training and associated education simply does not respond swiftly and flexibly enough to growing changes in skill requirements. An economic upturn now would make this abundantly clear ... (20)

In fact, even with unemployment figures of 3,300,000 - 3,900,000 (according to methods of calculation) there are skill shortages at present, most of them in high technology areas, but including some specialisms in traditional industries. (21)

In places the language of the discussion paper suggested that the M.S.C. was testing opinion about its potential leadership role in the creation of a comprehensive national strategy for adult education and training. The management of change involved "influencing opinions and attitudes". The education/training systems had to respond to the aspirations of individual workers. "An economic emphasis in a training strategy should exploit, rather

than ignore, their right to personal development throughout working life ..." There were several references to "a system ... " or "the system of training and associated education". However, as the Further Education Unit pointed out in its response,

> ... no such system exists. We have at present a secondary system of education which is seen by many adults as irrelevant to the world of work; we have a further education and training system which, although responsive, relates only to a small fraction of our working population; and we have an adult education system that is piecemeal in its coverage and generally vulnerable to cuts in public expenditure. The education of adults remains a privilege rather than a right. (22)

After digesting comments on **Towards an Adult Training Strategy** received from over 700 organisations and individuals, the M.S.C. issued its "Proposals for Action" in November 1983. The Commission disclaimed any desire to act as a leader in reshaping the adult education/training system. Its role would be that of a catalyst. Furthermore it accepted that "it would be unrealistic to expect that any substantial additional public resources will be brought to bear on adult education and training" and therefore the "productivity" of existing provision must be improved. The M.S.C. advocated a national awareness campaign about the importance of training, supported by a Training Information Network; the modernisation of occupational training arrangements, with assessment systems related to defined standards of skill instead of time-serving; the further development of the Open Tech programme (see below); and the revision of the TOPS scheme. The MSC recognised that some TOPS courses trained people for instant redundancy; "... the balance between newer and more traditional skills is wrong". The Commission therefore proposed that its own provision should be divided into two categories: "job-related training directed to known employment needs"; and a programme specifically for unemployed people, concentrating on basic skills. (23)

In the White Paper, **Training for Jobs**, published in January 1984, the government gave a general endorsement to the M.S.C.'s proposals, including one for a loans scheme for people in work who were willing to pay for training which would increase their earning power. (The government later allocated £5,000,000 for a pilot loans scheme in the financial year 1985-6). At the same time, the transfer of a quarter of the funding of work-related non-advanced further education to the M.S.C. was announced. The Commission produced detailed proposals for its new directions in November 1984. (24)

The government has recently answered the question, "What happens to Y.T.S. trainees who do not find work at the end of the training year?" by deciding to extend the Youth Training Scheme to two years, provided that employers agree to pay "a fair share" of the additional costs. This would have the effect of removing all

the under-18s from the labour market - and from the unemployment statistics. It is hoped that the two-year programme will lead to recognized vocational qualifications - a kind of national apprenticeship scheme. (25)

The Y.T.S. scheme has been discussed at some length in this section, although its trainees are not adults as defined in this work, because of its importance in the evolution of the M.S.C. and its potential influence on the future pattern of post-18 education and training. Another programme for the young is the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, pilot programmes of vocational education for 14-18 year-olds in schools. (26)

The "Open Tech" programme was launched in autumn 1982, to promote the use of open-learning methods in training and up-dating, mainly for technicians and supervisors in industry. The M.S.C. provides pump-priming finance for industrial enterprises, training boards, colleges and other organisations which devise learning packages involving written and audio-visual materials, computerised programmes and tutorial support. Unlike the Open University, this work is not entrusted to a single institution. (27)

The annual expenditure of the M.S.C. has risen from £641 million in 1978-79 (including £62.7 millions for special Youth programmes) to £1,800 millions in 1983-84 (including nearly £800 millions for the Youth Training Scheme). (28)

M.S.C. discussion documents and policy papers, and related government decisions, have come thick and fast during the last few years. It is probably too early to assess the contribution of the M.S.C. to the development of a comprehensive national policy for "training and associated education", but it is not difficult to argue that such a policy does not yet exist. As an example of the dysfunctional consequences of cutting down one sector of education and training to find funds for another, the government decided in March 1985 to offer additional funds to universities and polytechnics to provide an extra 4,000 places for students of engineering and computer science, who are badly needed by industry. However, the higher education institutions will find it difficult to recruit academic staff of the right quality, because of the effects of severe cuts in university funding since 1981.

Lord Young, a minister with special responsibility for dealing with unemployment, who was, as Mr David Young, formerly chairman of the M.S.C., has no doubts that policy is moving in the right direction.

> We are now in the midst of our own cultural revolution ... At long last our education system has begun to recognise the needs

of industry and commerce; that we need to inculcate enthusiasm and enterprise and to programme people for a life that includes work, even self-employment, that we must prosper as a trading nation ... The next century will not be like the last. (29)

4 The L.E.A. non-vocational sector

Local education authorities in England and Wales provide non-vocational courses through three main forms of organisation:

(a) **Adult Education Centres.** This will be used as a generic term as it is the most widely-used description, but some are known as Institutes, and a relatively small number which have their own substantial premises have been designated as Colleges of Adult Education or Adult Colleges.

(b) **Community Colleges**, in some areas called Community Schools, which provide programmes similar to those of the Centres, but are responsible for a school and normally for youth work as well as for adult education.

(c) **L.E.A. (vocational) Colleges.** Some provision is made by polytechnics and colleges of higher education, but most of the non-vocational college courses are provided by colleges of further education, some of which have the sole or main responsibility for non-vocational provision in their areas.

Enrolment figures for categories (a) and (b) above and for L.E.A. youth centres are given together in the November statistics, and the main pattern and trends for England are shown below. (30)

	M E N		W O M E N		A L L S T U D E N T S		
	under 18	over 18	under 18	over 18	under 18	over 18	TOTAL
1979	146,900	386,700	144,600	1,064,000	287,500	1,450,700	1,738,200
1980	132,700	342,800	134,700	933,300	267,400	1,276,100	1,543,500
1981	125,600	303,100	166,800	920,000	292,400	1,223,300	1,515,700
1982	127,600	346,000	132,800	920,000	292,400	1,273,100	1,533,500
1983	120,800	386,600	120,600	1,00,1000	241,300	1,386,700	1,628,000

In November 1983 about 500,000 people over the age of eighteen were enrolled on college of F.E./H.E. courses not leading to recognised examinations, most of whom were following programmes similar to those provided by institutions in categories (a) and (b) above. On the other hand, a small percentage of the students of the latter were studying for examinations, mainly G.C.E. The non-examination enrolment figure therefore came to about 1,800,000.

To translate **enrolments** into **students**, it is necessary to deduct

one figure in respect of students who were enrolled on more than one course at the time of the November returns; and add another for the students joining classes in the second or third terms but not in the first. The statistics required for this exercise are not available, but in the view of experienced professionals a net addition of ten per cent would err on the side of caution. This produces an estimated total for England of 2,000,000. A similar rough and ready calculation for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland would add about 250,000 to the national total.

These statistics should be used with great caution. Apart from the intrinsic defects in the data referred to above and in section 2, the figures of non-vocational student numbers are of little if any value for purposes of comparison with other sectors of adult education, because of differences in the length and intensity of periods of study, in persistence rates and in the nature of the learning process. They provide, however, some indication of the substantial scale of the non-vocational sector. In addition, the statistical returns indicate some important features and trends.

As the table above shows, women outnumber men in the adult enrolments in categories (a) and (b) in England by roughly three to one. In the period 1979-83 the percentage of women ranged between 72 and 75.2. The total of adult enrolments was declining in the period 1979-81, through the combined effects of fee increases (discussed below) and cuts in programmes, with some recovery by 1983. Enrolments in 1983 on college of F.E./ H.E. courses not leading to recognised qualifications (all ages) were 12% below the 1978 figures.

A significant recent trend has been the increase in daytime provision by Adult Education Centres. Between 1976 and 1983 the proportion of daytime enrolments by students over 18 rose from about 12% to nearly 30%. The figure for men went up from about 5% to nearly 20%, and for women from about 15% to about 32%. Unemployment and earlier retirement are two of the causes of these substantial increases (some special programmes for the unemployed have been provided with M.S.C. funds), but there is clear evidence of a previously unsatisfied demand from married women not in paid employment and elderly people, especially those without cars who find daytime travel more convenient and safer.

This trend has important implications for organisation and policy. As long as non-vocational adult education was identified with "night classes", it was reasonable to regard the provision of separate buildings for such activities as uneconomic. A centre used intensively from 9 am to 10 pm presents a very different picture. Daytime attendance also allows for a greater intensity of learning activities - more classroom hours in the week - than is feasible in most evening provision, as has been demonstrated particularly by "New Opportunities for Women" and "Return to Study" programmes which have been offered by some Adult Education Centres, as well as by colleges of F.E./H.E., polytechnics, universities and the W.E.A.

There are no national statistics about non-vocational subject distribution, but a survey by Mee and Wiltshire published in 1978, covering about a third of the 104 L.E.A.s of England and Wales, and about a quarter of their total provision, gave the following percentages: (31)

Subject categories		Percentages	
1	Craft and aesthetic skills	53	
	1.1 related mainly to personal care and the household economy.		34
	1.2 related mainly to leisure time enjoyment.		19
2	Physical skills	24	
	2.1 health and fitness		10
	2.2 sports and games		14
3	Intellectual and cognitive skills	18	
	3.1 language courses		12
	3.2 others		6
4	Courses (all subjects) for disadvantaged groups	5	

Categories 1.1 and 1.2 correspond roughly with the subject groupings "domestic arts" (cookery, dressmaking etc.) and "creative arts" (painting, pottery, etc.) used elsewhere in this book.

Since Mee and Wiltshire wrote there has been a decline, in England and Wales, in enrolments for some basic handicraft courses, eg dressmaking, partly through the deterrent effects of high fees but also because the relative cheapness of chain-store clothes and self-assembly furniture has made some forms of home dressmaking and woodworking uneconomic.

John Horobin has furnished some comparative figures for Scotland, relating to the provision by the nine Regional and three Island authorities which have the main responsibility for non-vocational adult education.

	1975–76 %	1980–81 %
Physical activities	33.5	43.8
Practical subjects	49.1	27.2
Arts	7.6	14.4
Sciences	0.6	1.0
Social Studies	1.8	2.8
Other subjects	7.0	7.2
Literacy	0.4	3.6

Between 1975-76 and 1980-81 enrolments on the above courses fell by 48%, as a result of programme cuts and fee increases, with most of the decline being registered in 1976-77. Therefore the volume of provision in practical subjects in 1980-81 was little more than a quarter of that for 1975-76; and the provision of "physical activities" had actually declined by nearly 50%. The percentage of women on the above courses in 1980-81 was 74.4, virtually identical to the figure for England.(32)

In the majority of L.E.A.s the control exercised over non-vocational centres is administrative and financial rather than curricular, except for the encouragement of programmes for various groups labelled "disadvantaged". The subject balance is influenced by agreements and understandings between different providing bodies about their respective roles, but is otherwise mainly a product of the interaction between the professionals running the service and the consumers. A growing minority of L.E.A. centres has some kind of students' organisation which plays a greater or lesser part in the decision-making process. About 130 centres, colleges of adult education and community colleges in England and Wales together with about 20 independent, university or joint L.E.A./university/W.E.A. centres, are members of the **Educational Centres Association**, which is a vigorous advocate of the causes of adult education and student democracy.

The Educational Centres Association was founded in 1946 out of the Educational Settlements Association, which had been set up in 1920 to link voluntary adult centres (several of them known as Settlements) such as Swarthmore, Leeds (1909), St Mary's Settlement, York (1909) and Beechcroft Settlement, Birkenhead (1914); together with some residential colleges. The E.C.A. has grown rapidly in recent years, and the number of students in member-centres has now reached about 400,000. In 1979 the D.E.S. agreed to provide a small annual grant, enough for the employment of a full-time secretary. The E.C.A. organises conferences, produces pamphlets and campaigns for the expansion of adult education. (33)

In March 1984 the D.E.S. informed the E.C.A. that it proposed initially to reduce, and by 1988 to withdraw completely, its grant, which was £18,000 in 1983-84. Its arguments were that the E.C.A. campaign for student democracy was, although "legitimate", not sufficiently "central to the government's concerns"; that the function of running conferences and disseminating ideas was carried out by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, which was supported by the D.E.S. as well as by the Council of Local Education Authorities; and that it was the current policy of the D.E.S. "to support specific adult and continuing education initiatives and to move away from general grants given without limit of time". (34)

To return to the question of financial systems, some L.E.A.s operate a "net budgeting" system whereby an institute or centre is given each year a net sum of money, to which is added all the income derived from the students, to spend on part-time teachers and other recurrent costs, e.g. materials. These L.E.A.s usually fix the general level of class fees and the concessionary rates to be offered to retired people,

the unemployed and other disadvantaged groups. At the other extreme are the L.E.A.s which predetermine the size of the class programme, the minimum enrolment per class and every detail of expenditure and financial procedures. There are even L.E.A.s which require adult education institutes receiving gifts of money for particular projects to secure a "supplementary estimate" in order to regularise the expenditure.

Colleges of further education which act as the main agent for the provision of L.E.A. non-vocational adult education in their areas usually have a greater degree of freedom and flexibility. They can make marginal transfers of financial resources and staff time between one field of work and another. This can sometimes work to the disadvantage of non-vocational provision, but usually makes for a more efficient use of total resources.

Some of the large non-vocational centres and colleges have sufficient full-time staff to provide a principal, vice-principal and heads of departments for the main subject areas or functions. The typical full-time professional is, however, a lone figure, who is head of an institute or centre or an "area principal" responsible for several centres which have part-time heads. The Mee-Wiltshire survey found that 70% of full-time staff had been trained as school-teachers. Usually they had worked for a time in a school, then become involved in adult education as part-time centre heads, and finally taken a full-time adult post. Only about 15% had a specialist qualification in adult education. Furthermore very few are qualified in any of the three main subject areas which together account for about three-quarters of L.E.A. non-vocational provision - domestic arts, creative arts and physical education. (35)

The "lone" principal has a heavy load of administrative work, much of it rather menial in character and some of it arising out of the problems of shared use of day-school buildings. Adequate clerical and ancillary support is rare. The time available for curricular planning in co-operation with teachers, students and contacts in the community outside is therefore limited. Not surprisingly, some of the principals tend to think quantitatively. In such subjects as painting and pottery they are likely to provide a succession of courses year after year at roughly the same level, instead of developing a progressive hierarchy of courses - beginners, intermediate and advanced. These pressures can be relieved by the work of L.E.A. advisers. However, few L.E.A.s have an adequate advisory staff for non-vocational adult education and some have none at all.

The potentialities of the imaginative teaching of the domestic arts were emphasised by the Russell Report (1973).

> With teaching and facilities of the right quality these become much more than the transmission of customary skills; they are activities involving taste and imagination, appreciation of form, colour and design, and understanding of the nature and proper use of materials. (36)

Statements about what can be achieved by a gifted teacher in a favourable environment should be coupled with some observation about what teachers of average skill and commitment actually manage to do. In fact most classes in the domestic arts are severely functional in purpose, and it would be wrong to conceive of the average dressmaking class as essentially a medium for the study of taste and design.

Considerable progress has been made during the last few years in England and Wales in implementing the reports of government advisory councils on the training and education of teachers (A.C.S.T.T. and A.C.S.E.T.) in the further/adult education fields. The target groups are full-time lecturers in colleges of further education without a teaching qualification; and the part-time teachers who conduct the great majority of non-vocational courses. Many of the L.E.A.s, in association with Regional Advisory Councils, provide basic and more advanced training courses for part-time teachers (A.C.S.E.T. I and II); and in a few cases there is a comprehensive training network which links up with postgraduate courses taught in university departments of adult education.

The provision of non-vocational adult education can have other justifications, reflecting other satisfactions for the students, than the achievement of effective learning. A dressmaking or Ladies' Keep Fit class in an isolated village may represent the only socially acceptable activity, apart from the monthly meeting of the Women's Institute (see section 11 below) to which a married woman can go on her own. There are other situations, e.g. in the deprived inner-city areas, where the benefits of socialisation may weigh heavily in the scale against the measure of educational achievement. It is sometimes argued that students who are drawn into an adult education centre for a pursuit with high social and low educational satisfactions can be encouraged to move on to more demanding activities, but hard evidence about the frequency of this progression is difficult to secure.

Many professional adult educators are unwilling to set a limit to the area of provision which can be justified essentially as a process of socialisation; or - which amounts to the same thing - they stretch the definition of education to embrace socialisation. As a result the curriculum is extended to include, for example, classes in centres in the affluent suburbs in subjects such as bridge playing, which may be seized upon by critics of the non-vocational service as evidence of its unsuitability for support from public funds.

It is unfair to lay the blame for this situation - if blame is the right word - at the door of the "lone" full-time principal. The system he operates compels him to pay particular attention to numbers of students. In some cases increases or decreases in total numbers take him out of one salary grade into another. The fault lies rather with the vicious circle which accords non-vocational adult education a low priority, partly because it is seen as a marginal leisure-time pursuit, and as a result denies it the resources, particularly for adequate full-time staffing, specialist advisers and training, which would allow the service to achieve its great educational potential. The case for the

latter does not have to be argued in the abstract, as it is realised in many of the well-staffed, well-provided institutes, centres and colleges.

For the modest resources invested in it - about ½% of the total education budget - the L.E.A. non-vocational service, whatever its limitations, provides excellent value. A nation facing the prospect of involuntary increases in leisure - whether through unemployment, early retirement or a shorter working week - should be expanding and not limiting facilities for its creative use. Adult educators would not need to worry about the image of the service were it not for the political disadvantages of accentuating the marginality of L.E.A. non-vocational work. As Professor Harold Wiltshire wrote recently,

> In discussing the uses of courses (as seen by students) it is a common assumption that if they are not for work then they must be for leisure ... the work/leisure dichotomy is a particularly dangerous one for the adult educator to accept, for if he then goes on to accept the common non-sequitur - that education which is not for work is for leisure and that this is a sufficient definition of its purpose - then he has no defence in principle against the absurd calculus of pleasure which attempts to establish whether an hour of adult education should cost more or less than an hour of bingo or a pint of beer. (37)

The "absurd calculus" has been applied with a vengeance. As a result of pressure from central government to reduce local government expenditure (see pp 11-12), many L.E.A.s have increased student fees during recent years by much more than the rate of inflation. The average fee for non-vocational courses rose by 24% between 1980-81 and 1981-82, but the next two annual increases moderated to 8% and 5% respectively, a factor which helps to explain the recovery in enrolments described earlier. The average fees in pence per hour of tuition were: 1980-81: 41; 1981-82: 51; 1982-83: 55; 1983-84: 58. In 1983-84 98 of the 104 L.E.A.s in England and Wales provided information for the annual fee survey by N.I.A.C.E. Of these, 35 authorities were charging between 56 and 66 pence per hour (i.e. from £22.40 to £26.40 for a course of two hours per week for twenty weeks), but the total range was very wide, from 20 pence to £1.09 (£8 to £43.60 for a twenty-meeting course).

Nearly all of the L.E.A.s offered reduced fees to those in receipt of old-age pensions (payable to men over 65 and women over 60), 8% charging no fee at all. For unemployed people, 31% of the L.E.A.s charged no fee, the remainder offering either automatic or discretionary reductions. Most L.E.A.s extend their concessionary systems to people in receipt of certain social security benefits. There is a rather similar system of concessions for examination courses, for which the average fees per hour are now in most L.E.A.s much lower than for non-vocational courses. (38)

Some L.E.A.s have adopted a policy of making non-vocational fees cover the full marginal costs of provision, of which the largest element is the stipend of the part-time teacher, with the authority bearing the

costs of concessionary fees. In other areas, however, the fee-paying students have also to contribute to overheads, or the concessions, or both. The effects of sharp increases in fees are well known. Initially enrolment declines; then, unless further large increases follow, it recovers, but with a greater proportion of the students coming from the more affluent sections of the community and, in areas with a generous concessionary policy, from those who pay no fee or reduced fees. In some areas badly hit by unemployment, half of the students are receiving concessions.

An additional problem for the L.E.A. non-vocational section is the recent claim by the Customs and Excise department that "recreational" courses provided at economic charges are subject to Value Added Tax. Education "of a kind provided by a school or university" provided "otherwise than for profit" is exempt from V.A.T. on services under the 1972 Finance Act. According to Customs and Excise, "otherwise than for profit" requires the fixing of student fees below the level necessary to recover "the direct costs of mounting the course". Some L.E.A. classes have been levied for V.A.T., despite the representations of the local authority associations. There is concern that V.A.T. inspectors may not only make restrictive decisions about "direct costs", but may also attempt to make judgements as to what constitutes "education" for which they are quite unqualified. The matter remains to be resolved. (39)

Concern about the V.A.T. issue has been one factor in opposition by adult educators to the recent decision by Birmingham City Council (Labour controlled) to transfer its substantial adult education network from the Education Committee to the Leisure Services department, as part of a plan to secure the more intensive and cost-effective use of all local authority leisure facilities. The intention is to run the enhanced leisure programme for 52 weeks in the year, and not just for academic terms. Fears have been expressed that the adult education service will suffer through being managed by people with no appreciation of educational aims and values, but the authors of the scheme argue that non-vocational adult education will be better off than in its present marginal position in relation to the statutory education services. (40)

A contrasting view of the appropriate affiliation of the adult education service is embodied in the idea of the Community College, the multi-functional campus responsible for a school (usually secondary), the youth service and non-vocational adult education. About a quarter of the L.E.A.s in England and Wales have established community colleges in at least part of their areas, many of them attracted by the presumed administrative advantages of unified control for services sharing the same building. The community colleges themselves usually subscribe to an ideology, with its roots in Henry Morris's scheme of Village Colleges in Cambridgeshire, which emphasises the value of an integrated educational provision for the local community. The community college brings undoubted benefits to the school function: close links with the local community; the improved behaviour of pupils who see adults studying in the same institution. The balance of advantage for adult education is much more difficult to calculate. Adult educators fear that the school element will always be dominant. With a few exceptions, the principals of

community colleges are essentially headmasters or headmistresses with added responsibilities. The achievements of the leading community colleges are impressive if compared to the services which existed before they were built, much less so if comparison is made with comparable facilities available on a shared-use basis. Leicestershire L.E.A., for some years the leading advocate of the community college, has dented its image by making substantial cuts in the staffing and funding of the adult education side of its colleges. (41)

Some community colleges have taken seriously the idea of student democracy. Thirty-seven colleges are members of the Educational Centres Association, which means that they should be giving student representatives a considerable measure of responsibility. In some other colleges, however, recent research has brought to light a convenient excuse for not sharing power with the students: the people who take office are unrepresentative activists; the professionals must retain control in the interest of the "non-joiners". (42) Many adult educators, particularly those who are convinced of the distinctive character of the educational process for the mature and autonomous adult, would regard the community college as a very interesting and worthwhile experiment which had not yet been established as the best way forward for the country as a whole.

A different concept of community education was adopted in Scotland as a result of the report of the Alexander Committee, **Adult Education: the Challenge of Change** (1975). The committee found that the adult education service of the local authorities, apart from the work undertaken with L.E.A. finance by some university departments of adult education, was poorly developed by comparison with England and Wales - and not only because of the problem of the thinly-populated highlands and islands. In particular there were very few full-time appointments. On the other hand since 1960 there had been a substantial expansion of the "youth and community" service, organised by an increasing number of professionally-trained full-time youth workers. The main growth was in youth work, but with also "a significant trend towards Community work and the development of all-age community centres", (43) the latter often provided in partnership with voluntary community associations. The relative strength of the youth/community service was one of the considerations which prompted the Alexander Committee to recommend the merger between it and non-vocational adult education, to produce a "community education" service. As with the community colleges in England, there is more than a suspicion amongst adult educators that the word "community" has been adopted because it is a good word - not quite as good as "mother" but nevertheless guaranteed to make everyone feel warm inside - rather than because it represents a clearly thought out and distinctive concept.

A Scottish Council for Community Education was set up in January 1978 (replaced in 1982 by the better-resourced Scottish Community Education Council) to advise on the implementation of the Alexander proposals and the development of Community Education. The local authorities have adopted the latter name for their youth and community services, merged with adult education structures where they already existed. There has been a modest development of work with the

disadvantaged, but at the expense of the general provision of non-vocational adult education. Ian Bryant has summed up recent trends in Scottish adult education as follows. "There appears to be a sharp decline in participation in adult education classes, while innovative projects have multiplied, and adult participation in formal education has increased."(44)

To complete the survey of L.E.A. non-vocational provision, L.E.A. short-term residential colleges provide courses lasting for periods of two days to one week in a wide range of subjects, in arts and crafts, music and dance, languages and other academic subjects, especially field studies, history and archaeology. Some also provide closed courses for industry or commerce, and accommodate in-service courses for their own L.E.A.s. Similar institutions are run by trusts, National Parks, the Field Studies Council, etc., or maintained as private enterprises, and further reference will be made to those in sections 12 and 14. Most of the L.E.A. colleges, together with a few of the others, have recently formed the Adult Residential Colleges Association. (45)

5. Adult Basic Education

Section 4 has shown how L.E.A. non-vocational adult education, far from having its modest financial resources doubled as recommended by the Russell Report in 1973, has since that date had to face increased financial stringency. The one major exception has been the Adult Literacy campaign, out of which a strategy for adult basic education is gradually emerging. The Russell and Alexander Reports drew attention to the special needs of people who had hitherto been untouched by adult education because of social or educational disadvantages of various kinds. Pressure by adult education bodies on the government to implement the Russell Report was reinforced by the "Right to Read" campaign started by the British Association of Settlements (i.e. voluntary social and/or adult education centres) which claimed that two million people in Britain could not read and write adequately. The British Broadcasting Corporation proposed a major broadcasting project on literacy.

In response to these pressures, the government established in 1975 the Adult Literacy Resource Agency, attached to the National Institute of Adult Education. In its first year A.L.R.A. received a grant of £1,000,000, of which £100,000 was for work in Scotland. A separate Scottish Adult Literacy Agency (Sc.A.L.A.) was set up in 1976, attached to the Scottish Institute of Adult Education. A.L.R.A. received a further grant of £2,000,000 for the two years 1976-77 and 1977-78. It sponsored training programmes, published teaching materials, gave grant-aid to voluntary bodies, and employed staff who were assigned to L.E.A.s - a device to circumvent the rules then in force which prevented the direct funding of L.E.A. projects by central government. In 1976-78, 66% of the A.L.R.A. budget was used to employ staff assigned to L.E.A.s, and 14.4% was paid to voluntary organisations. Sc.A.L.A. received a total of £408,000 for the three years 1976-79, and operated along similar lines.

The B.B.C. broadcast television programmes directed at those in need, and a radio series on methods of teaching adults to read. A national telephone referral service, through which potential students could be put in touch with educational agencies, was organised with the financial support of the Ford Foundation and other charitable trusts and the co-operation of the broadcasting authorities, including Independent Television. A key feature of the literacy campaign in the last few years was the extensive use of unpaid, voluntary tutors, giving personal tuition to individual students often in the homes of the latter. The use of volunteers was a familiar feature of the work of voluntary bodies but a novelty for L.E.A.s. The volunteers were given short training courses and the support of local, paid (usually part-time) co-ordinating tutors. About 80,000 volunteers were involved during the first five years. Professional teachers were used mainly for class teaching. (46)

To continue A.L.R.A./Sc.A.L.A. indefinitely as funding agencies would have violated the principle that government financial support for the main local government services, including education, should be given through the Rate Support Grant. After three years, therefore, A.L.R.A. was replaced by the Adult Literacy Unit, with a budget of £584,000 for a

two-year period, and in 1979 Sc.A.L.A. was converted into Sc.A.L.U. with a budget of £54,000 for one year. The units provided an advisory service and published teaching material, gave financial help to voluntary bodies, but provided grants to L.E.A.s only for special innovatory projects. The government put £1,300,000 into the Rate Support Grant calculation for 1978-79 in the hope that the money would find its way into literacy work, but the response of the L.E.A.s varied considerably. Some had put much more into their literacy programme than they had received from A.L.R.A., but others would have done nothing but for the impact of the B.B.C. programmes and the promptings, and resources, of A.L.R.A. (47)

By the time the Adult Literacy Unit came to the end of its appointed two years of life, an estimated 160,000 people in England and Wales had received some literacy tuition during a five-year period, which can be compared with an estimated 5,000 a year receiving help in 1972. (48) The Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education, at the request of the D.E.S., produced a report, **A Strategy for the Basic Education of Adults** (1979), which argued that the literacy campaign should not only be maintained but should be broadened to include numeracy and an area of basic general knowledge labelled "life skills" or "coping skills" - for example, how to fill in forms, deal with local authorities and government agencies concerned with welfare, housing, etc. The inclusion of the latter provides a bridge between two old-established aspects of adult education, literacy education which can trace its ancestry back to the adult schools and night schools of the early nineteenth century; and education for citizenship, which was of the main aims of co-operative education and later of the W.E.A. and other voluntary bodies. It is understood, however, that "life skills" or "coping skills" in the context of adult basic education (A.B.E.) relate to studies undertaken alongside literacy or numeracy tuition, and not independently.

In 1980 A.L.U. was succeeded by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (for England and Wales) with a remit to develop work in "literacy and numeracy and those related basic communication and coping skills, without which people are impeded from applying or being considered for employment". Its central concern was to be literacy. A.L.B.S.U. received grants for its initial three-year term totalling £2,895,000. The Scottish Adult Basic Education Unit was also set up in 1980, with a grant of £60,000 for the first year, rising to £140,000 in 1982-83. In 1983 S.A.B.E.U. was removed from its affiliation to the Scottish Institute of Adult Education, and became the concern of the Scottish Community Education Council. (49)

A.L.B.S.U. was established on a more permanent footing in 1984, with a three-year rolling programme from 1985, i.e. its programme and finance were to be reviewed annually for three years in advance. The annual grant from the D.E.S. and the Welsh Office is to be increased from £1,450,000 in 1984-85 to £1,800,000 in 1985-86 and £2,000,000 in 1986-87 and 1987-88. A substantial part of the grant is to be devoted, as it has for the last few years, to development projects intended to create models for general appplication - e.g. developing links between basic and general adult education; teaching basic education skills to mothers of young children so that the latter will not be trapped in a cycle of cultural deprivation; an independent learning model for an integrated approach to

learning literacy, numeracy and English as a second language; and A.B.E. provision for unemployed adults. Other roles for A.L.B.S.U. are, and will continue to be, consultancy and advisory work, training programmes and publications. (50)

In November 1983, 108,874 students in England and Wales were receiving A.B.E. tuition, 1,725 from voluntary organisations and the remainder (over 98%) from L.E.A.s. 18,105 of the total were on the Youth Training Scheme. The adult students are included in the non-vocational statistics given in section 4. Over 21,000 voluntary tutors were at work, two-thirds of them involved in individual tuition. Most of the students were learning in groups taken by paid tutors, in some cases with voluntary assistance. In Scotland at the same time about 17,000 students were being taught by 4,000 tutors, most of them volunteers.

About 55% of L.E.A.s charged no fees for A.B.E. in 1983-84; 3% charged the full non-vocational fee; and the remainder offered some reductions. The annual report of A.L.B.S.U. for 1983-84 estimates that 80% of L.E.A.s had maintained the 1982-83 level of funding for A.B.E., 10% had increased it, and 10% had made cuts. The disparity of provision between one L.E.A. and another, which had been a feature of the literacy campaign since its inception, continued. One L.E.A. with a population of about 300,000 provided over £80,000 for A.B.E. Another with 225,000 people allocated just over £5,000 for the same purpose. (51)

The demand for adult basic education is still focussed mainly on literacy. In most areas, numeracy provision is still small in scale. An A.L.B.S.U. report in 1984 suggested that its development had been hampered by a tendency to see numeracy "as a mirror image of literacy, rather than as a distinctive strand of basic education". In consequence, suitable strategies for publicity, recruitment and methodology had, in many areas, yet to be achieved. (52) It is clear, however, that for either literacy or numeracy it is no longer realistic to think in terms of a short, sharp campaign to eradicate the problem. Adult Basic Education is settling in as a permanent feature of the adult education system.

6 The Workers' Educational Association

The W.E.A. has a special position as a voluntary body which is part of the public education system. It has played an important part in the shaping of the adult education system in England and Wales - although not, as explained in Chapter 3, in Scotland or Northern Ireland. To quote the words of a German observer in 1912, it has successfully combined "the organising and the prophetic spirit", and has remained an essentially voluntary body with a relatively small professional staff. It is decentralised, most of the power and resources belonging to the 21 districts and 940 branches. The founder of the W.E.A., Albert Mansbridge, had a passionate belief in local democracy and voluntarism. It could be argued that in translating this belief into organisational terms he went too far, as the central office of the W.E.A. has very limited staffing and financial resources in relation to its essential functions. (53)

In its evidence to the Russell Committee the W.E.A. identified for itself four fields of endeavour: the promotion of liberal academic study, both by direct provision and in partnership with the universities; social and political education to contribute towards the W.E.A.'s traditional objective of building up an informed democracy; trade union studies; and work with the educationally and socially deprived, for example the residents of poor inner-city areas. The Russell Report (1973) gave a general endorsement to the W.E.A. recommendations, but with an important difference of emphasis in the field of liberal academic study. The Report proposed that the W.E.A. should concentrate on studies "below the level of university work ... in the role of an educational pioneer". It should allow its links with the universities to weaken, as it concentrated on work with the disadvantaged, and should support increased L.E.A. provision of academic subjects. (54)

The W.E.A. saw its "liberal academic" provision as central to its work, not only because of its intrinsic value, but because it was the recruiting ground for most of the voluntary workers who ran the W.E.A. branches. Furthermore, the association was proud of the achievements of some of its classes (particularly three-year tutorial classes organised jointly with universities) in academic subjects. Classes in Local History, for example, had engaged in serious research leading to a stream of publications of group work, some of it substantial.

In post-Russell discussions within the W.E.A. there was a tendency to deal separately with liberal studies on the one hand, and trade union studies, social and political education and work with the disadvantaged on the other. The latter group became known as "Russell-type work". It was generally assumed that, as the Russell Report had recommended that expenditure on non-vocational adult education should be doubled, the traditional academic work would continue without hindrance and additional resources would be made available for expansion in the three priority areas. The publication of the Report coincided, however, with the beginning of a period of severe restraint in public educational expenditure. It was also a time of rapid inflation, which created problems for an association which relied upon income from voluntary

sources for between 20% and 25% of its expenditure, and upon grants normally fixed in advance.

In 1975-76 the D.E.S. rescued the W.E.A. from its financial crisis by means of a generous supplementary grant. In that year the number of W.E.A. students reached the record level of 173,000. At about the same time the W.E.A. agreed with the D.E.S. that it would shift the balance of its work towards trade union studies (to be 31% higher in volume by 1978-79) and towards social and political education and work with the disadvantaged (each to be 12% higher in the same period). To encourage pioneering work the D.E.S. relaxed some of the restrictions on the use of its grant by the W.E.A. Previously the grant formula had been: up to 75% of tutors' salaries, fees and expenses, subject to an annual ceiling. The new formula produced a similar grant in real terms, but allowed the money to be used for non-teaching costs. Current financial arrangements and problems are discussed on pp 21-23.

By 1978-79 the W.E.A. had overshot the target for trade union studies and had reached the other two. In some districts this expansion caused a reduction in the provision of "academic and liberal studies". Voluntary workers began to express concern not only about the restrictions on their own educational opportunities, but also about the shift in the balance between the voluntary and professional sides of the W.E.A. Most of the provision for trade unionists takes the form of day-release courses organised at district level in co-operation with the T.U.C. Education Department or individual trade unions. Some of the work with the disadvantaged, e.g. in hospitals, is also easier to organise professionally than through the local branches. (55)

An unwelcome solution to the problem came through the steep rise in unemployment from 1979, which reduced the volume of trade union education. The trend can be seen in the table below, compiled from district returns of W.E.A.-provided classes. (Complete figures are not available for 1982-84). The figures for trade union education are reliable for comparative purposes, but those for the disadvantaged are not, as there is no uniform method of classification. The table is, however, useful in showing the trends from year to year. The increased provision for the disadvantaged reflects in part the development of programmes for the unemployed. (56) The statistics in the remainder of this section refer to the whole of the United Kingdom.

Numbers of class meetings in W.E.A.-provided classes

	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84
Academic-liberal	31,119	30,157	29,441	33,974	-	-
Trade Union	27,562	23,415	16,600	16,220	-	16,816
Social and Political	13,336	12,112	12,898	12,536	-	-
Disadvantaged	16,893	16,663	17,818	20,188	-	-
Total	88,910	82,347	75,619	82,818	90,125	94,336

In 1983-84, in addition to the 94,336 class meetings in W.E.A.-provided courses, there were 34,587 in joint courses with university departments of adult education, i.e. courses organised by the W.E.A. but provided by the university. The leading subject groups expressed as a percentage of the total number of meetings were:

(a)	Trade Union Studies	14
(b)	History (half of it local History)	13.4
(c)	Science (mainly biological and field)	12.1
(d)	Social sciences other than (a) and (g)	10.4
(e)	Visual Arts	10.1
(f)	English Language, Literature and Drama	9.4
(g)	Women's Studies	5.2
(h)	Music	4.1
(i)	Modern Languages, Literature and Culture	3.3
(j)	Archaeology	2.5

Enrolments in 1981-82, classified by length and type of course, were:

Three-year tutorial classes	4,716
Sessional classes (20-24 meetings)	37,053
Terminal classes (10-12 meetings)	62,573
Shorter courses	33,940
Day schools and single lectures	29,684
Tutor training courses	924
Residential courses	3,529
Total	172,419

Full comparable statistics are not available for later years, but the total number of enrolments in 1983-84 was 184,299.

The organisational structure of the W.E.A. is set out in Figure 3. Each district has a full-time secretary, occasionally an administrative assistant, and a small clerical staff. In 1983-84 there were 136 tutor-oganisers (who combine teaching and organising duties) whose posts were supported by grants from government departments of education; and a further ten supported by special grants from, e.g. the M.S.C., the European Economic Community Social Fund, and Inner City funds. In addition there were nine development officers paid for out of general funds and seven financed from special funds; and an average of 3½ administrators and clerical staff per district. The districts employ large numbers of part-time tutors. The branches, staffed by voluntary officers, do the local organising, with the assistance where necessary of tutor-organisers.

The principal sources of central office funding in 1983-84 were: district subventions 59%, D.E.S. grant 28%, affiliated societies (mainly trade unions) 7%. The structure at national level is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 3 WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION ORGANISATION CHART

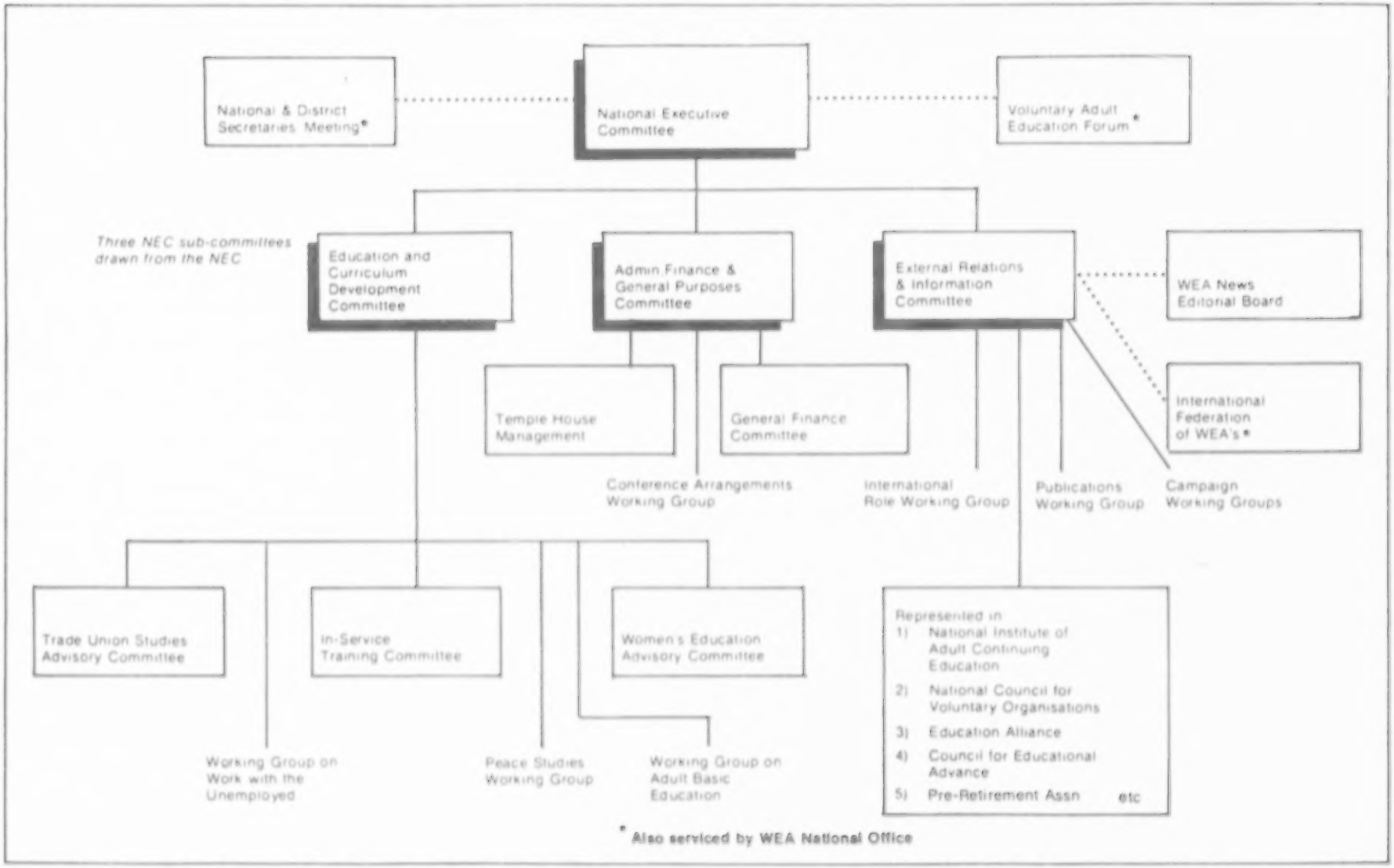
KEY

----------→ Representation

——————→ Action

..... Liaison

Full-time, paid positions underlined


National & District Secretaries Meeting*
National Executive Committee
Voluntary Adult Education Forum *
Three NEC sub-committees drawn from the NEC
Education and Curriculum Development Committee
Admin Finance & General Purposes Committee
External Relations & Information Committee
WEA News Editorial Board
Temple House Management
General Finance Committee
International Federation of WEA's*
Conference Arrangements Working Group
International Role Working Group
Publications Working Group
Campaign Working Groups
Trade Union Studies Advisory Committee
In-Service Training Committee
Women's Education Advisory Committee
Represented in
1) National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
2) National Council for Voluntary Organisations
3) Education Alliance
4) Council for Educational Advance
5) Pre-Retirement Assn etc
Working Group on Work with the Unemployed
Peace Studies Working Group
Working Group on Adult Basic Education
* Also serviced by WEA National Office

94 Figure 4 - W.E.A. Organisation, National Level (Reproduced from W.E.A News)

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The National Executive Committee should be seen, not as the voice of a distinct national level of the federal framework, but as the place where the representatives of districts and affiliated societies meet, together with the voluntary officers elected by the national conference, and representatives of full-time staff in the districts, to keep a firm controlling hand on national policy and affairs. District representatives are in a majority on the N.E.C. and on its finance sub-committee. The working groups have a limited life. They are set up to investigate a particular issue, and the reports prepared for the 1985 national conference indicate some of the areas of current concern: Working with the Unemployed, Adult Basic Education, Peace Studies, the W.E.A.'s Role in International Affairs, and Publications Policy. The Campaign Working Groups which appear in Figure 4 are concerned with the W.E.A. campaign launched in response to the cuts in D.E.S. grant referred to on page 22, which has now developed into a broader campaign to raise awareness about, and secure more resources for liberal adult education.

As the 940 branches of the W.E.A. have a high degree of autonomy, it is difficult to generalise about their roles and achievements. Some are concerned mainly with working-class education and the needs of the disadvantaged. Others devote considerable attention to the educational needs of women - a strong women's movement has developed spontaneously within the W.E.A. in recent years. Some of the most effective branches are in rural areas, where local democracy works well, and where the weekly class in history or literature or social studies may make a major contribution to the quality of life.

Voluntary organisations have intrinsic strengths and weaknesses, and it needs a special effort in an organisation such as the W.E.A. to combine democracy, efficiency and innovation. Voluntary workers usually find it easiest to attract people like themselves. Even when branch officers are enthusiastic, welcoming and open-minded, there can be major socio-cultural barriers arising out of differences in educational background, occupation or age which inhibit the participation of the very people whom the W.E.A. would most like to recruit. This is a long-standing problem, often discussed within the association. On the other hand, the traditional WEA ideas about student democracy and the importance of a dialogue on equal terms between academic knowledge and life expeprience are no less relevant today than in the past. The objectives of the W.E.A., which may be summed up as the creation of an educated democracy, will for the foreseeable future carry the label "unfinished business".

7. Long-term Residential Colleges

The nine long-term residential colleges form a small but valuable section of adult education. There are six in England: Ruskin College, Oxford, founded in 1899, Fircroft (1909), the Co-operative College (1919), Hillcroft (1920), Plater (formerly called the Catholic Workers' College) Oxford (1921) and Northern College in South Yorkshire (1978). Wales has Coleg Harlech (1927) and Scotland Newbattle Abbey (1937). Hillcroft is for women only, the others take both men and women. They receive direct grants, including from time to time money for capital works, from the D.E.S. and its counterparts, for the provision of the "liberal education of adults". The Co-operative College also has a management training function for the Co-operative movement. Most of the colleges owed their origin to philanthropic endeavours, but the main driving force behind the creation of the Northern College has been a consortium of four South Yorkshire L.E.A.s. (57)

In 1983 the ninth college opened in Belfast, the Ulster People's College, accommodated in a large house bought with the aid of a grant from the Nuffield Foundation. It will concentrate on political and social education to combat the sectarian divisions of Northern Ireland. After at first refusing to do so, the Department of Education of Northern Ireland has recently agreed to grant-aid the Ulster People's College. The college project has been supported by community organisations, women's groups, trade unions and the W.E.A. (58)

The main purpose of the colleges is the provision of full-time courses in the liberal arts or social sciences, lasting for one or two years, for adults with serious academic interests who seek the benefits of residential study. Most colleges organise some short residential courses as well. They have no formal entrance requirements, but rely on interviews and other informal selection processes. A high proportion of their students left school at the minimum leaving age, and many had been in manual occupations. Some colleges have a small number of overseas students. The British students are entitled to mandatory grants on the same terms as university or college undergraduates. Some scholarships are provided by trade unions and other organisations, and these are now used mainly to supplement the incomes of students with families.

The decline in the vigour and cohesion of the working-class movement, which was one of the main causes of the crisis in the W.E.A. in the early 1950s, also affected the long-term colleges. It had been the tradition that students would return to serve the working-class movement, some by becoming W.E.A. tutors (normally after taking a university degree), most by going back to their former occupations and communities. There they would be of service to their fellows as voluntary activists and leaders, especially in trade unions and political work. The return to the workbench was never an easy experience. Serious study changes people, almost by definition. A year or two away from home in a collegiate atmosphere leaves its mark on the ex-student's vocabulary, attitudes, insights and sometimes values. Even in the heyday of the working-class movement, returning students were often received with suspicion by their workmates.

As the ideal of service to the working-class movement weakened, "re-entry" became both less attractive and more difficult. College students turned increasingly to professional careers, although usually those with a service ethos, e.g. social work, school teaching or adult education. For some careers, a two-year college diploma is sufficient, e.g. one of the Ruskin diplomas which carries a social work qualification. For others a degree is either necessary or desirable. Many students look to the college to prepare them for a degree course at a university or occasionally a polytechnic. Students who are successful in some two-year courses, e.g. the courses at Ruskin or Plater leading to Oxford University diplomas, may be admitted to the second undergraduate year at some universities, which allows them to complete the college course and a degree in four years. Other students achieve the same objective by enrolling as first year undergraduates after one year in college. Newbattle Abbey used to enter students wishing to go to university for the public examinations normally taken by 18 year-olds, but the college came to realise that this was not the most suitable road for mature students to follow. It now awards its own diploma after a two-year course, and this is accepted as an entrance qualification by most universities.

The long-term colleges, as communities, are run on an easy-going democratic basis, as befits a collection of adults. Tension can, however, develop over such issues as commitment versus objectivity, and over the control of academic business such as syllabuses and examinations. A complex dispute rooted in these matters came to a head at Fircroft College in 1975, and led to the temporary closure of the college. It was re-opened in September 1980, and has since functioned normally. (59)

In 1982-83 the six English colleges had 461 students on one- and two-year courses, and the total number of such enrolments for the whole of the United Kingdom was nearly 600. The colleges also provide short courses and summer schools and have residential accommodation for about 1,000 students altogether. (60)

8 The Universities

The universities (excluding the Open University which will be considered separately) contribute to the education of adults in five ways:

full-time mature students
part-time degrees
part-time or short full-time post-experience courses
part-time liberal academic courses
full-time and part-time diploma and higher degree courses in the subject of adult education.

The most convenient administrative definition of mature students is those who are aged 21 or over at the commencement of their courses. In 1982-83, 7,141 new entrants, 9.7% of the total for the United Kingdom as a whole (excluding overseas students), were in this category. The relative performance of the four countries and recent trends are shown in the table below:

New full-time entrants over 21 years of age

	1972-73		1978-79		1982-83	
	Number	% of intake	Number	% of intake	Number	% of intake
England	4,758	10.2	6,260	11	5,188	9.2
Wales	471	11.4	701	13.4	691	13.8
Scotland	1,251	12.5	1,199	11.2	949	9.1
Northern Ireland	253	13.3	269	13.9	313	13.1
United Kingdom	6,733	10.8	8,429	11.2	7,141	9.7

The significant decline since 1978-79 in the percentage of mature students going to universities in England and Scotland is probably due mainly to pressure on places from an age cohort of 18 year olds which reached its peak in 1982. It will be seen, however, that Northern Ireland and Wales (which had 14.2% mature entrants in 1981-82) have resisted this trend. (61) As the size of the 18 year old group declines - gradually during the remainder of the eighties, steeply in the early nineties - universities are likely to show a greater interest in mature candidates. (62)

Potential mature students have four possible routes to university entrance: A-level or equivalent courses at colleges of further education; long-term residential colleges; special programmes for mature preparation for university entry, some run by groups of L.E.A. colleges and others by university departments of adult education; and attendance at other courses of a serious academic nature run by the latter departments. Universities vary in their attitudes to applicants without the usual formal qualifications for university entry. Some have flexible policies

for mature entry, and will allow a candidate to matriculate on the basis of evidence of serious academic study. Others ignore the adult education experience and tell prospective students to go away and take A-levels. There are also differences between departments in the same university, depending partly on the relevance of life and work experience to the subject concerned. Some departments in the arts and social sciences like to have a proportion of mature students in their classes, because their presence enlivens discussions.

In 1982-83 the universities in England, Wales and Scotland had fewer than 5,000 part-time undergraduates, about 2% of the total of home and E.E.C. students. By contrast, 45% of postgraduates were studying part-time, a figure which has risen, from about 37% in the mid-seventies, as it has become relatively more difficult to secure grants for research or other forms of postgraduate study. The interest in part-time first degree programmes is growing. Sixteen universities in England, Wales and Scotland now make some provision, ranging from the facility to attend regular full-time courses taught during the day (but taking fewer courses in any one year) to courses planned specificially for part-time students. Most of the courses are in arts, social sciences and law. The leading institution in this field is Birkbeck College, London, which grew out of the London Mechanics' Institute and caters mainly for part-time students. (63)

The relative scale of liberal academic and post-experience provision is shown below (United Kingdom, 1982-83). (64)

	Courses	Enrolments	Student hours
Adult Education Depts (including joint courses with W.E.A.)	12,433	273,833	6,092,400
Postgraduate medical and dental	3,060	76,358	1,898,300
Others (mainly post-experience vocational)	4,164	110,038	3,118,400
Totals	19,657	460,229	11,109,100

The first category above consists mainly of liberal academic provision, but includes some Post-Experience Vocational Education (P.E.V.E.). The figures in the third category are probably understated, because some short courses may not be returned to the Universities Statistical Record.

The non-medical P.E.V.E. courses are provided in a wide range of

mainly applied studies, usually designed to put the student in touch with recent developments in his field. Subjects include recent legislation on, for example, industrial relations; advances in industrial techniques, e.g. mineral processing; management techniques; or whatever the university has to offer and which employers see to be of value to their staffs. These courses are normally self-financing, with the employers (occasionally the students themselves) paying an economic fee.

The commitment of the University Grants Committee to the expansion of continuing education (the term currently favoured to embrace P.E.V.E. and liberal adult education) has already been mentioned, in section 1 above. The joint statement made in September 1984 by the U.G.C. and N.A.B. included the following passage:

> Continuing education needs to be fostered not only for its essential role in promoting economic prosperity but also for its contribution to personal development and social progress. It can renew personal confidence, regenerate the human spirit and restore a sense of purpose to people's lives through the cultivation of new interests. In short, both effective economic performance and harmonious social relationships depend on our ability to deal successfully with the changes and uncertainties which are now ever-present in our personal and working lives.

The U.G.C. argued in its own submission that "continuing education in its various forms should now be seen as a major responsibility of the universities along with their responsibilities for teaching full-time students and for research". (65)

At the time of writing, the U.G.C. is still considering the recommendations of a Working Party which it set up in December 1982 to examine the development of continuing education and related financial questions. The Working Party reported in January 1984 and proposed a significant expansion of post-experience vocational provision, with an improved U.G.C. grant per full-time equivalent student. A similar encouragement was suggested for part-time degree provision, but little enthusiasm was shown for the traditional liberal academic provision of the university departments of adult education. The report acknowledged "the very valuable work" done by departments with "responsible body" status, i.e. university departments of adult education in receipt of direct grant from the D.E.S. or Welsh Education Department, but went on to say that "by providing support for this single aspect of continuing education in some universities but not in others, the 'responsible body' system does produce anomalies which we think are difficult to justify."

It is odd to describe a large and varied programme with 273,000 enrolments as a "single aspect", and even more surprising that the report failed to mention that the existing Responsible Body (R.B.) departments cover the whole country. In some towns which have universities which are not R.B.s, an Adult Education Centre is provided or supported by the R.B. university in whose area the town lies. As some of the newer universities (Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Warwick) have now achieved R.B. status there

could be no objection in principle to the others following suit if they so wished. In the same paragraph, however, the report asks whether the present R.B. direct grant "should continue to be limited to adult liberal education", and whether the R.B. funds should be transferred to the U.G.C. The commitment of universities to liberal adult education varies considerably, and if there were no longer any earmarked grant (itself being reduced, as explained on pp 20-21) for this work, the pattern of provision could change radically.

The relative importance given by the U.G.C. Working Party to P.E.V.E. and liberal academic provision reflected the composition of the Working Party, which included four members from industry and commerce, three from sections of the universities concerned with P.E.V.E., and only one Professor/Director of Adult Education. The Working Party visited six universities, none of them an R.B. (66)

Twenty-seven universities in England and Wales have Departments of Adult Education (or Extramural Studies, or Continuing Education) in receipt of direct D.E.S./Welsh Office grants towards "the liberal education of adults". Seven Scottish and two Northern Ireland universities operate in the same field, but with different financial arrangements (see Chapter 2). The staffing structure of these departments is quite different from that of the greater part of L.E.A. non-vocational sector which has relatively few full-time teachers. In 1982-83 the above universities (excluding Warwick, which was not then an R.B.) had 565 full-time teaching and administrative (excluding clerical) posts, of which 329 were supported by government departments of education, 195 by the U.G.C. and the remainder by other funds. The number of such posts in 1978-79 was 604. The decline is due partly to the transfer of social work courses to other departments, and partly to financial stringency. The adult education departments also used about 8,000 part-time lecturers in 1982-83. Nearly 40% were university lecturers, 10% came from other institutions of higher education, and the others included professional people, academically-qualified women not in full-time employment, retired university academics, and school teachers.

The most popular subject groups, expressed as a percentage of courses, were (United Kingdom, 1982-83).

History, including local history	10.7
English literature and language	8.6
Visual arts	7.1
Biological sciences	6.5
Physical sciences	6.0
Archaeology and ancient history	5.6
Sociology	5.35
Music	5.3
Psychology	3.7
Mathematics and computing	3.1

The pattern of provision is shown in the following tabulation of enrolments (United Kingdom, 1982-83).

		Separate provision	Joint provision with W.E.A.	Totals
a	Courses lasting for two years or longer	8,422	3,787	12,209
b	Sessional courses (20+ meetings)	31,444	18,228	49,672
c	Terminal courses (10+ meetings)	39,635	9,673	49,308
d	Shorter courses	55,417	6,315	61,732
e	Residential and similar courses lasting four days or more	20,983	386	21,369
f	Ditto, three days or less	74,711	3,794	78,505
Totals		230,612	42,183	272,795

The figures for joint provision with the W.E.A. are included also in the statistics of W.E.A. enrolments given in section 6. Although the joint course enrolments represented only 15.5% of total provision, they accounted for 35.5% of courses lasting for one session or longer. If the universities of Scotland and Northern Ireland, which do virtually no joint work, are excluded, the percentages become 18.3 and 38. Universities differ considerably in their policy relating to the length of courses. Only six (Cambridge, Hull, Keele, London, Surrey and Sussex) have more enrolments in categories a and b above than in c and d, and only London still has a substantial commitment to three-year courses. London accounts for more than half of the enrolments in category a, many of them being students on its diploma and certificate courses. (67)

Most university adult education departments provide at least a few courses leading to university qualifications, usually a diploma or certificate, but often students choose these courses because they want some tangible record of achievement rather than for a specifically vocational motive. Most courses are taken for their intrinsic intellectual interest, or for their relevance to the student's professional or social roles. People with several different kinds of motivation can be found in the same class - some wishing to update their specialist knowledge; others to pursue "balancing" studies, e.g. a scientist learning about philosophy; others with an appetite for original

scholarship in, for example, local history; home-based women interested in child psychology, or wanting to measure themselves against an intellectual challenge in preparation for resuming a career or starting a new one. Some classes produce "something tangible" in the form of published books, research papers or reports, especially in local history, archaeology, social studies and the field sciences.

Most of the liberal courses are provided in the evenings. There is some weekend work, and residential vacation schools at home and abroad. The volume of daytime provision is increasing, partly to meet the needs of women who because of family commitments find it difficult to attend evening classes or who want to be able to devote one or two days a week to study. These programmes often include creche facilities for children under school age (five years). Early retirement and unemployment also increase the demand for daytime courses.

Another form of daytime provision consists of day-release courses for trade unionists, often organised in co-operation with the W.E.A. Whereas most of the courses provided by colleges of further education or directly by the W.E.A. last for ten or twelve days, some of the university courses last for two or three years - either as continuous units or as successive stages of a progressive programme. They are therefore much broader in scope, as well as more advanced in standard, than basic training courses for shop stewards. The staff are normally engaged in research into some aspect of industrial studies.

Some university adult education departments organise part-time degree courses on behalf of their university, with the teaching provided by the adult education staff or members of specialist subject departments as appropriate. Hull and Kent have pioneered the idea of two-stage courses, the first stage leading to a certificate, the second to a degree.

Hull developed a comprehensive strategy for "continuing education leading to degrees", after the experience of running two successful part-time degree courses in psychology. The strategy involves some two-stage courses; an easy movement from general adult education courses into degree courses; some courses offered during the day and others in the evenings; and whenever administratively possible freedom of movement between part-time and full-time courses. The programmes currently being provided are law, social studies, modern literary and historical studies, European art and civilisation, theology and regional and local history - the last-named being the first undergraduate degree in the subject ever provided in a British university. (68)

University adult education courses have certain general, although not universal, characteristics. The atmosphere is one of free enquiry, based on the traditional dialogue between academic learning and life and work experience. Discussion plays a major part, and written work is intended to, but is sometimes neglected. It is understood that the

conceptual level achieved before the end of the course, although not necessarily at the beginning, should be comparable to that of mainstream university work.

As, however, the universities are independent institutions, no two are exactly alike in their policies and practices in adult education. Certain schools of thought can be identified. Some departments, while accepting the fact that most of their students will have had a full secondary if not some tertiary education, have a special concern for the "educationally underprivileged". Others emphasise their role in "educating the educated", and note with pleasure the number of graduates in their classes. Some university adult educators judge the value of their work by the **standard** reached by the students, often arguing that what matters is less the absolute level reached than the length and steepness of the gradient climbed. The "standard" party stresses the need for courses of adequate length and the importance of student effort including written work. Others put their faith in the **quality** of the lecturer, taking the view that a university teacher operates at a university level whenever he teaches, whether his students are undergraduates or adults and however long the course. Most full-time university teachers are drawing upon intellectual resources which are regularly being renewed by study and original research. (Without a substantial output of published work lecturers in both adult education and other departments have poor prospects of promotion.) The **quality** argument is weakened by the extent to which part-time lecturers are employed who, whatever their intellectual quality might be, do not have the same opportunities for study and research, e.g. school teachers.

Twelve university adult education departments specialise in the study of Adult Education itself, in all its aspects and not just in relation to the subjects in which the departments provide courses for the adults of their respective regions. Most offer diploma courses; and several provide a range of higher degree programmes up to the level of Doctor of Philosophy. Most of the latter are open to both full-time students (including a substantial number from overseas) and part-time students. Some of the full-time students, and many of the part-timers, work in L.E.A. institutions. The universities concerned also organise short residential courses or seminars for adult education professionals and activists.

The twelve departments together with some other research institutions and the Open University have formed the Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (S.C.U.T.R.E.A.). The staff and research students of these departments make a major contribution to the expansion of knowledge of adult education in Britain and overseas.

9 Trade Union Education

Courses for trade unionists are provided through complex arrangements involving the government, employers, the Trades Union Congress, individual trade unions, and the providing bodies in adult education. Voluntary trade union officers - shop stewards and health and safety representatives - are entitled to paid educational leave to attend courses relevant to their roles under the provision of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Employment Protection Acts of 1975 and 1978. Under the 1978 Act, a workplace representative is entitled to take reasonable time off during working hours to undergo training in aspects of industrial relations which is:

i) relevant to the carrying out of (his) duties; and
ii) approved by the Trades Union Congress or by the independent trade union of which he is an official. (69)

However, arranging release is rather more complicated than the legal provision would imply, and a good deal depends upon both the skill of full-time trade union officials and the economic climate.

In 1982-83 day release courses for shop stewards and health and safety representatives were provided, in cooperation with the T.U.C. Education Department, by about 150 L.E.A. colleges (including some polytechnics), most of the W.E.A. districts, and some university departments of adult education. They used for this purpose part of their general resources as described in sections 2, 6 and 8. In addition, the T.U.C. receives a special grant from the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Employment to fund its educational activities, including the payment of the course fees charged by the providing bodies. Some of the money is passed on to individual trade unions for their educational programmes. The government grant rose from £400,000 in 1976-77 to over £1,800,000 in 1981-82, but has since been cut back substantially in real terms (i.e. allowing for inflation). In 1984-85 it was £1,740,000, including £200,000 for courses "specifically endorsed by employers" as being relevant and beneficial to good industrial relations and health and safety. (70)

The T.U.C.-sponsored programme consists in the main of three types of course, each lasting for ten days (mainly one day a week for ten weeks): a basic training course, concentrating on organisational skills, union roles and workplace bargaining; a more advanced follow-on course; and a course on health and safety. Trends in provision are shown in the following table, which gives numbers of students.

	Basic	Follow-on	Health & Safety	Total
1975-76	9,463	1,441	5,360	16,264
1978-79	13,421	3,074	27,361	43,856
1980-81	14,910	6,940	12,067	33,917
1982-83	11,724	12,757	6,737	31,218

The figures for 1982-83 are misleading for comparative purposes in that they include special courses, usually of only two days in length, arranged to deal with new regulations on sick pay. If these are converted into ten-day units, the enrolment figure drops by about 5,800. A major factor in the decline since 1978-79 has been the growth of unemployment, which has caused a fall in the membership of T.U.C.-affiliated trade unions from about 12,200,000 in 1979 to about 10,000,000 at present.(71)

In 1982-83, in addition to the above figures, there were 38,000 enrolments on residential and short courses organised by individual trade unions; 1,138 enrolments on T.U.C. postal couses; and over 8,000 enrolments on other courses organised directly by the T.U.C. or its Educational Trust, including those designed specially for full-time union officials and trade union studies tutors. Enrolment figures do not equate with students, as some people attended more than one course, but this is a feature of adult education statistics in general. (72)

In August 1984, the T.U.C. opened its new residential college in London, converted from a former college of art at a cost of about £3,500,000. The college will arrange courses for about 2,400 trade unionists each year, concentrating on the needs of full-time officers. To fund this operation, a special increase in union affiliation fees has been agreed which will bring in about £250,000 a year. (73)

Some trade unions, as well as supporting the T.U.C.-sponsored programme, have negotiated with employers day release arrangements for longer courses provided by colleges or university adult education departments. The latter arrange courses of up to 72 days in length, usually over three years, dealing not only with the role of shop stewards, but also with broader economic and political issues. Both the W.E.A. and the universities organise evening or weekend courses of particular interest to trade unionists. Some of the long-term residential colleges include in their programmes short residential courses for trade unionists. (74)

The staff involved in teaching trade union courses in the W.E.A. and universities are usually specialists in this field, who include the authors of some of the standard works. In the colleges much of the teaching is undertaken by lecturers in departments of business and management studies or of general social studies, but the number of specialist trade union studies centres or units is growing. The T.U.C. Education Department provides briefing notes for students and training courses for tutors; the Society of Industrial Tutors organises conferences, training sessions and research projects; and this field is included in the W.E.A.'s in-service training programme. Both the Society and the W.E.A. publish trade union studies journals.

A major issue for trade union education at the present time is a reconsideration of objectives and curricula in the light of the economic

and political situation. Trade union representatives facing plant closures and redundancies, the reorganisation of working methods to secure higher productivity and new government legislation which is designed to limit the powers and privileges of trade unions, are equipped with skills which assume stable employment and a central role for local collective bargaining. They are skilled at conducting meetings, taking minutes and writing reports, but they often have only a limited understanding of the broader issues and of alternative economic and political strategies.

As a result of this situation, the demand is growing - so far it appears to come mainly from the academics engaged in trade union education - for a shift of emphasis towards the study of broader economic and political questions, and for a renewed effort to involve the trade union membership as a whole (including women), and not just shop stewards, in adult education. Such a development would call for adjustments of attitude on the part of the employers, trade union hierarchies and the government. It might not be impossible to persuade all three of the advantages to the economy and society in general of having politically-educated trade unionists, but it would certainly be more difficult than gaining acceptance for the value of having efficient shop stewards dealing with the day to day problems of industrial relations.

10 The Open University

The Open University was established in 1969 to provide higher education for part-time adult students by distance teaching methods. It recruited its first students in 1971. Currently about 60,000 students are working for a degree, and about 40,000 more are taking a variety of other programmes. The core of the instruction consists of printed correspondence materials, prepared by course teams which draw upon the expertise of scholars outside as well as inside the Open University. Set books are also used, some of them produced specially for O.U. courses. The printed material is linked to television and radio broadcasts put out on behalf of the O.U. by the B.B.C. Most of the television output is concentrated on Saturdays and Sundays, between about 6.30 am and early or mid-afternoon, when nearly 20 hours of programmes are broadcast. Other radio and television programmes are scheduled for early mornings and late evenings on weekdays. Programmes are often repeated to give some choice of viewing or listening times. The Open University has established about 260 study centres where face to face teaching and advice are offered by tutor-counsellors and where tapes of some broadcasts are available. The centres are supervised by thirteen regional offices, ten in England and one each in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Open University provides general degrees, built up on a credit system, with six credits required for a pass degree and eight for honours. Students with appropriate tertiary qualifications (especially school teachers) may claim exemption for up to three credits. Students are allowed to take up to two full credits in one year (there are some half-credit courses) but this would require a heavy workload and the average is one credit per year. First year students begin with a foundation course in one of five areas: Humanities, Social Science, Mathematics, Science, Technology. Other courses, in a wide range of subjects, are offered at second, third and fourth levels. Students on foundation and certain other courses are required to attend a one-week summer school which provides intensive study with face-to-face teaching and, where appropriate, laboratory work. (75)

The Open University is genuinely "open" in the sense that no formal entrance qualifications are required. Places are offered on a "first come, first served" basis, subject to regional quotas and quotas for each of the five foundation courses. At first the O.U. attracted mainly the **relatively** deprived, particularly non-graduate teachers whose profession was moving towards an all-graduate entry. It is significant that in the ten years before the O.U. became operational, 1961-71, the percentage of the 18 year-old age group going into higher education doubled, from 7% to 14%, thus creating a large group of "relatively deprived" amongst people in their thirties or older. (76) The credit-exemption system also helps the holder of tertiary qualifications, especially the teacher, who can start in the Open University already half-way to an ordinary degree. In addition the relatively well qualified student understands the system better, and has more self-confidence, than an unqualified student of comparable intelligence.

In 1971 31.4% of the entry held a teacher's certificate and 13.3% a university first degree or diploma. Only 6.3% had no formal

educational qualifications. Since then the proportion of teachers has fallen steadily, and the percentage of students without the normal qualifications for entry to higher education (two A-levels or the equivalent) has risen from 35% to 44%. Only about a quarter of the first intake were women, but by 1984 they constituted nearly half of the new undergraduates. (77)

The main source of income for the Open University is a direct grant from the D.E.S. Since 1980, however, the annual increases in grant have fallen well behind the rate of inflation, and a further substantial cut in real terms is planned for the next two years. Student fees for a full credit course have risen from £67 in 1980 to £141 in 1985. Allowing for the expense of summer schools, books, travel and, for science students, equipment specially produced for home study, the costs of completing a degree now range from £1,000 to £1,500 or more. Although assistance is offered to disadvantaged students, partially funded by a special government grant for work with the unemployed, large numbers of applicants withdraw before final registration because of financial difficulties, especially in the regions worst affected by economic depression. Open University students, in common with other part-time degree students, are not entitled to mandatory grants. Assistance is entirely at the discretion of L.E.A.s. In 1981-82 nearly half of L.E.A.s offered some help with summer school or travel costs, but fewer than 10% gave grants towards course fees. (78)

In 1975 the Open University set up a Committee on Continuing Education, under the chairmanship of Sir Peter Venables. After receiving evidence from a wide range of organisations concerned with the education of adults, the committee recommended in its report published in 1976 that the Open University should try to make a major contribution to adult education outside its degree programme. The committee pointed out that the Open University had developed a unique expertise in the creation of integrated courses of an interdisciplinary nature, involving a synthesis of theory and practice - features which would make the courses relevant to the needs of adults in society. The Open University, with its national network, could also contribute to the development of an information and counselling service.

The Centre for Continuing Education, governed by a Delegacy, was set up in 1980. In the O.U. "continuing education" means any provision other than the undergraduate programme and the small-scale postgraduate operation. It includes courses taken from the undergraduate programme and offered as separate elements to Associate Students, and short courses and learning materials developed specially for Continuing Education. Management education programmes, under the banner of the Open Business School, have been planned in association with such bodies as the British Institute of Management and the Administrative Staff College, Henley. They include STARTUP (start up your own business) launched with the support of Barclays Bank, which is investing £240,000 on a shared-risk basis. Other programmes within the post-experience vocational area are concerned with microprocessor applications and technological updating.(79)

Continuing Education in the O.U. has other subdivisions, known as sectors:

In-Service Education for Teachers;

Community Education, with programmes and study packs on, for example, The Pre-School Child, Governing Schools and Planning Retirement;

Health and Social Welfare, e.g. Caring for the Elderly, The Handicapped Person in the Community;

Personal and Cultural Education, e.g. The Changing Countryside.

The Open University receives no additional grant from the DES for its Continuing Education programmes, which therefore have to meet all marginal costs and also make a contribution to development and production expenses. The DES has made over £3,000,000 available for PICKUP (professional, industrial and commercial updating) provision, but only as a loan. Some programmes have been supported by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health and Social Security. However, the self-financing basis of most of the Continuing Education is seen as a major constraint, especially in study areas where there is no direct economic benefit to students or their employers. (80)

The Open University, which now produces nearly 6,000 graduates a year, has been a resounding success in two ways. First, it has developed an effective system of distance teaching. Its teaching materials and methods are open to critical scrutiny and most, although not of course all, are regarded by the relevant sectors of the academic world as being very sound. Some Open University course books and textbooks are used in other universities and colleges. The principal limitations are the impersonality of the main teaching process, with most assignments either computer-marked, or dealt with by tutors who rarely meet the students, and, related to this, the limited amount of face-to-face teaching, especially for second and higher level courses. The Open University consists, however, of a distance-teaching system locally supplemented, and not of a federation of local learning centres drawing on centrally-produced resource materials. Secondly, the numbers of students, their generally high degree of motivation and level of persistence - about half of those who begin a credit course ultimately graduate - have fully justified the establishment of the O.U. and have shown how great was the unsatisfied demand for part-time degrees. The Continuing Education area, if adequately financed, has considerable potential for further growth.

The success of the Open University has attracted a good deal of international attention. Unlike other major adult education movements, e.g. the Folk High Schools in Denmark or the W.E.A. in England and Wales, the success of which is closely related to social forces in the country of origin, the organisation of the distance-teaching system of the Open University makes it eminently transportable. The materials themselves, particularly those in print, are also available for use in other English speaking communities. In countries with a scattered population, and/or with limited facilities for locally based higher education, a high-quality distance-teaching system may prove its value for full-time as well as part-time education. The Open University has already become a major international, as well as national, force in adult education.

11. The Informal Voluntary Sector

The organisations described under the above heading are voluntary bodies, engaged in the education of adults, usually as part of a programme with wider social (or in some cases, religious) objectives. They can be distinguished from the organisations described in sections 6, 7 and 8 above in that the latter derive the greater part of their income from public funds, and provide part of the public education service under regulations formulated by the D.E.S. or the other government education departments. Separating them from "other agencies" briefly surveyed in section 14 (most of which are also voluntary bodies) is an arbitrary exercise, the main purpose of which is to emphasise the important role in adult education of some of the major organisations.

The criteria for selection used here is membership of the Voluntary Adult Education Forum, formed in 1984 to bring together the major voluntary and non-governmental organisations involved nationally in the education of adults.(81) Seven of the members have already been discussed: the Educational Centres Association; the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education; the Open University; the long-term residential colleges; the Trades Union Congress; the Universities Council for Adult and Continuing Education; and the Workers' Educational Association. The others are described briefly below.(82)

The National Federation of Women's Institutes has over 9,000 institutes, most of them rural, with 380,000 members. One of the objects of the movement is to

> provide for the fuller education of countrywomen in citizenship, in public questions both national and international, in music, drama and other cultural subjects, also to secure instruction and training in all branches of agriculture, handicrafts, domestic science, health and social welfare.

In pursuance of this aim, the W.I.s arrange for the provision of L.E.A., university and W.E.A. classes, and organise other classes independently. The subject areas include handicrafts, drama, music and social and political education. The National Federation has its own residential college, Denman College in Oxfordshire, which provides annually about 230 courses attended by 4,000 members; and its own publishing company. The W.I.s maintain an extensive training programme for craft teachers and competition judges, and for voluntary activists, e.g. the Voluntary County Organisers, whose role includes the foundation of new institutes. Many of the seventy county federations receive some financial support and/or assistance in the form of free school accommodation, from local authorities.(83)

The National Union of Townswomen's Guilds represents a parallel organisation for women in towns. It has about 2,700 guilds, with nearly 250,000 members. The T.G.s provide social and recreational facilities, promote educational activities (mainly in co-operation with the same

providing bodies used by the W.I.s) and aim to mobilise and present the views of women on local, national or international issues.(84)

The National Association of Women's Clubs has over 700 clubs and groups in membership. The clubs were first started in the 1930s as Social Service Clubs for the wives of unemployed men, and the movement is still relatively strong in the older industrial areas. The promotion of formal classes figures less prominently than in the W.I.s and T.G.s, but club meetings, held in the afternoon or evening, include discussions, talks, films and demonstrations.(85)

The Pre-School Playgroups Association does not itself run playgroups (for children under five), but provides guidance and training, on a voluntary basis, for playgroup leaders, and also trains its own part-time tutors. The courses provided for leaders are concerned mainly with the study of child development, and were attended in 1979-80 by 32,500 students. In some areas there has been close co-operation between the P.P.A. and the W.E.A.(86)

The National Federation of Community Organisations represents neighbourhood groups, which promote social, recreational and educational activities, the latter being provided normally by the L.E.A.s or other educational bodies. The N.F.C.O. provides training courses for group leaders and an advisory service, and publishes a periodical newsletter.

The above associations all receive grant from the D.E.S. towards the cost of maintaining the national level of the organisation, in recognition of their educational role. All are represented on the Council of N.I.A.C.E.

The Field Studies Council runs nine residential Field Centres, and one Day Centre, in England and Wales. The residential centres could be described as another group of short-term residential colleges, albeit with more spartan accommodation. Their courses are listed in the twice-yearly Calendar of Residential Short Courses, published by N.I.A.C.E. School children, mainly sixth-formers taking A-level courses, make up two-thirds of the clientele, with university/polytechnic students and adults each forming about one sixth of the total. The number of student-weeks in 1984 was 16,816. The main areas of study are biology, environmental studies, geography and geology, with art, photography, local history and other subjects accounting together for only 6.2% of the provision. The F.S.C. also engages in environmental research, and publishes an academic journal **Field Studies**.(87)

The Christian Association for Adult Continuing Education was founded in 1979 to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on the development of adult education in churches of all denominations. It publishes a magazine, **Collage**.(88)

The National Co-operative Educational Association, Co-operative Union Limited provides a service for 160 Co-operative societies with 9.5 million members. Some societies organise adult education activities for members. The N.C.E.A. provides postal courses, and long-term and short-term residential courses are available at the Co-operative College near Loughborough. The main emphasis of the College is on management and staff education, but there is also a full-time course leading to the University of Nottingham Diploma in Political, Economic and Social Studies, which is popular with overseas students (see also section 7 above).(89)

The Pre-Retirement Association provided in 1980 148 courses, with a total attendance of over 2,800, for people approaching retirement. The courses were sponsored by employers. The P.R.A. has also organised residential courses at holiday camps, which have attracted large attendances. The Association has 32 autonomous groups in affiliation. It publishes briefing material for use by other organisations, as well as a magazine, **Choice**.(90)

The Young Women's Christian Association plans adult education programmes for young adults, usually in co-operation with L.E.A.s, and promotes "Breakaway" courses for older women wishing to widen their horizons.

12. The Private Sector

This is the least known, in relation to its size and importance, of all of the sub-divisions of the system of adult and post-school education. There is no parallel, in the private sector, to the patterns of statistical returns and annual reports which furnish the basic quantitative data for the statutory and other publicly-financed providing bodies. The main elements of this sector have been listed in Chapter II: institutions of higher education; further education and secretarial colleges; trainers in information technology and related business studies; language schools; correspondence colleges; vocational (craft) training schools; professional associations with a training role; driving schools, including some specialising in heavy goods vehicle driving; and "recreational" providers.

The largest single category of the above, in terms of client numbers, is probably the driving schools. A study carried out in 1970-71 estimated that about 900,000 people annually were being instructed by driving schools.(91) There is, however, little value in lumping together the numbers of people receiving between ten and twenty hours' tuition in preparation for the driving test with those studying systematically for academic, professional and vocational qualifications - which is the main business of the rest of the private sector.

If driving schools are excepted, the sector is dominated numerically by the correspondence colleges. Forty-three colleges are currently accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Correspondence Colleges, which includes nominees of the Secretary of State for Education and Science as well as members elected by the colleges. Applicants for accreditation are inspected by retired H.M.I.s working for C.A.C.C. and those accepted are periodically re-inspected.(92)

It should in theory be possible to calculate the number of students served by the accredited colleges, but there are serious difficulties. First, the records of the colleges relate to enrolments on courses; a students may enrol for one course or for several. Secondly, there is a high drop-out rate, but it is often uncertain whether a student who is behind with his assignments has given up or not. Thirdly, information about enrolments and completion rates can be of commercial significance in what is a highly competitive field. A further complication, for a study of British adult education, is the considerable volume of overseas provision.

Estimates made of the number of correspondence college students in the 1970s ranged from 300,000 to 800,000.(93) As a former member of the C.A.C.C., I would judge that the total number of students, including those enrolled with non-accredited colleges, is unlikely to exceed 500,000, with at least a third from overseas.

In a survey of private sector institutions "offering education or training courses of a specifically vocational nature", Gareth Williams and Maureen Woodhall estimated that 15,000 students were attending management courses in the autumn term 1975, 10,000 (most of them from overseas) were taking language courses, and about the same number were studying accountancy or law.(94) They conclude that

> it is flexibility which appears to be the key to the survival and modest economic success of the sector as a whole. For example, compared with one or two starting dates per year in most public sector institutions we found that nearly half the private colleges allowed ten or more starting dates per year and over 40% allowed pupils to start on almost any date of their choice.

There was also a high degree of flexibility in the length of courses.(95)

Correspondence education is probably the most flexible instrument of all, in terms of starting dates and pace of work. The leading correspondence colleges prepare students for a wide range of professional and public examinations, up to the level of external degrees of the University of London. Some of them organise a limited amount of face-to-face teaching e.g. on weekend courses. The National Extension College, based in Cambridge, deserves a special mention for its work in promoting multi-media teaching. The N.E.C. (a non-profit-making Trust) provides correspondence courses for London external degrees, G.C.E. O and A levels and several professional examinations and has made a special feature of developing "Fresh Start" courses on basic study techniques and preparatory courses for intending students of the Open University. It has co-operated with both B.B.C. radio and television and Independent Television (see section 13) in the provision of correspondence courses linked to broadcasts, e.g. the B.B.C. T.V. series on "The Silicon Factor: living with the microprocessor", and the Yorkshire Television programmes on "Numbers at Work". The College has also formed links with colleges and centres of further/adult education to develop the "Flexistudy" system, through which N.E.C. correspondence material is reinforced by face-to-face individual and group teaching.(96)

The British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education has recently been established, to perform for the private sector colleges of F.E./H.E. functions similar to those of C.A.C.C. in the correspondence field.

Two current growth areas of the private sector are the information technology/business studies enterprises, which provide services both directly and through the Manpower Services Commission; and private teachers of dancing and physical recreation, who can often make more money for themselves and at the same time charge less to their students by going independent, than by working for L.E.A.s charging full economic fees to students.

13. Broadcasting

Broadcasting in the United Kingdom is the responsibility of two authorities, the British Broadcasting Corporation, financed by television licence fees, which has two television channels, four national radio channels (in both cases with some separate programmes for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the regions of England), and thirty local radio stations; and the Independent Broadcasting Authority, under whose aegis are fifteen television companies and fifty local radio stations, all financed from advertising revenue and operating as commercial organisations. There is no national commercial radio. A considerable proportion of the programmes produced by the "big five" independent television companies - London Weekend, Thames (London), Central Television (Birmingham), Granada (Manchester) and Yorkshire (Leeds) - is shown under networking arrangements by all the Independent Television stations. The I.T.V. companies and independent producers make programmes for the second independent channel, Channel 4.

Although a substantial part of the television output makes few demands on the intellect or aesthetic sense of the viewer, it is generally agreed that, by international standards, the cultural and technical levels of British television, commercial as well as B.B.C., are high. No commercial T.V. company proposing to pander to the lowest common denominator of public taste, would be granted a franchise. An existing company descending to that level could not expect to have its licence renewed. The existence of four national radio channels allows the B.B.C. to cater for a wide range of tastes in music, drama and talks, including programmes for serious minority interests.

Broadcasting plays a major part in the education of adults broadly defined, that is, the extension and deepening of intellectual and affective experiences. Three forms of educational or educative activity can be distinguished: programmes designated as "educational", often linked to the functions of other providers of adult education; programmes with a significant educative value included in the general output of broadcasting; and cultural presentations, e.g. plays, concerts, opera.

The specifically educational programmes are the responsibility of the Continuing Education Department of the B.B.C., the Education Departments of the I.T.V. companies (there are also large B.B.C. and I.T.V. provisions for schools), and the educational producers of local radio. The annual Continuing Education output of the B.B.C. is, including repeats, about 400 hours of television and over 300 of national radio. I.T.V. and Channel 4 provide weekly about nine hours of educational programmes for adults. The main subject areas are:

> Languages, including several European languages, and courses in English for ethnic minorities.
>
> Public affairs and history, for example a notable series by Robert Kee on the History of Ireland (B.B.C.).

Science and technology, including programmes on microcomputers such as "Making the Most of the Micro", in connection with which the B.B.C. negotiated for the large-scale production of the microcomputer known as "the B.B.C. micro"; and "Me and My Micro" (Yorkshire).

Arts, including series on music, literature and handicrafts.

Provision for the handicapped, for example the Channel 4/Thames magazine-style programme for the deaf, "The Listening Eye", which uses British Sign Language as the main means of communication.

Personal and family relationships, for example Parents and Teenagers (Central).

Health, including safety at home, the danger of smoking, and exercise.

Leisure skills, ranging from cooking to sport.

Some of the educational programmes are linked to the work of colleges of further education or other providers. Frequently, the series are accompanied by a book and, where appropriate, records or cassettes. Local radio stations concentrate on programmes which do not duplicate the national output e.g. a series of talks on local history, or studies of local economic or social problems.(97)

Some television or radio series would meet all the criteria of educational broadcasting but are included in the general output because of their great popularity. Three striking examples are (all from B.B.C. T.V.): Sir Kenneth (later Lord) Clark's series of thirteen programmes on **Civilization** (1969), a study of the development of European art and architecture; Jacob Bronowski's **Ascent of Man**, a history of scientific ideas and achievements (13 programmes, 1973); and David Attenborough's study of the evolution of life from its earliest forms to man, **Life on Earth**, (13 programmes, 1978). Each series was presented by a brilliant communicator, who had the support of first-class camera and productions teams. **Life on Earth**, for example, took three years to make, with film shot in all five continents, and producing pictures of fish, reptiles, insects and animals in their natural habitat which as well as being richly informative were often strikingly beautiful.

After each of the above series the edited scripts, accompanied by a generous selection of illustrations, were published in book form by the B.B.C. Some radio talks and edited television scripts are printed in the B.B.C. weekly journal **The Listener**, and the annual **Reith Lectures** appear both in this form and subsequently as a book. Independent T.V. companies also publish books based on some of their series.

The cultural presentations of radio and television include the broadcasting of performances from the concert hall, theatre or opera

house, and the production of many dramatic series devised especially for television, e.g. a cycle of Shakespeare's plays. Each year hundreds of single plays are broadcast, many of them commissioned for radio or television. The B.B.C. maintains eight orchestras.

The classification of broadcasting in a description of an adult education system presents some problems. It would be possible to regard "educational" broadcasting as belonging to the formal educational system, and the other two varieties "educative" and "cultural" as belonging to non-formal education, or to borrow a more appropriate French term "l'animation socio-culturelle".(98) For the adult educator there is an important practical distinction between "educational" and "general" programmes. The former may, under certain conditions, be recorded for educational use; the latter may not. Tutors may arrange with their students that the latter will watch or listen to a particular programme or series, but much greater use can be made of the broadcasts if they can be replayed in the classrooms to form part of a multi-media learning process. A distinction might be drawn, therefore, between learning opportunities which exist irrespective of the immediate response of the consumer, and those which are interactive by nature. In this case a broadcast would rank with a book, a painting, or a display in a museum as part of "l'animation socio-culturelle", leaving the inter-active elements of multi-media teaching to be noted in connection with the work of the associated bodies.

14. Other Agencies of Adult Education

In addition to the organisations already mentioned, there are many bodies which make some contribution to the provision of learning opportunities for adults. The largest group is concerned with physical education. Three members of the Publications Sub-Committee of N.I.A.C.E. (Derek Legge, Alan Chadwick and Howard Gilbert) recently compiled a list of 176 organisations, other than the obvious ones such as the W.E.A. and the Women's Institutes, which provided training for teachers of adults. More than two-thirds, i.e. about 120 organisations, were involved in sport, dancing and other forms of physical recreation.(99)

The other organisations include:

The Adult Schools, a movement with a religious basis which traces its origins back to the late eighteenth century (see Chapter III), and continues to operate on a small scale. About 200 schools (study groups) are linked by county unions and the National Adult School Organisation. Meetings are normally held once a week, with study circle methods, assisted by Study Handbooks produced by N.A.S.O.

The Marine Society, which incorporates the Seafarers' Education Service, founded in 1919 by Albert Mansbridge to provide libraries for merchant ships, and its offshoot, the College of the Sea, established by Mansbridge in 1938 to provide correspondence tuition for seamen.

Young Farmers' Clubs have some members over the age of eighteen, as well as a substantial proportion of younger people, and provide educational activities related to agriculture.

Some **National Parks** have an educational function. For example, the Peak District National Park has a study centre at Losehill Hall, Derbyshire.

The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders provides at fourteen Education Activity Centres a wide range of basic education courses for offenders and ex-offenders in the community. N.A.C.R.O. also operates an educational advisory service for prisoners wishing to follow courses after their release.

Some **charitable organisations** have an adult education function, e.g. running short courses and conferences. They include **MIND** (the National Association for Mental Health) and several groups concerned with the elderly: **Age Concern** and the associated **Forum on the Rights of Elderly People to Education**; **Help the Aged**; and **Centre for Policy on Ageing**. A relatively new organisation in this field, based upon a French idea, is the **University of the Third Age**.

The Churches organise extensive programmes of, mainly informal, adult education. Most of the work is done through voluntary societies and self-help groups at parish level, but increasingly the Churches are appointing professional advisers and animateurs, e.g. diocesan adult education officers. Some interesting patterns of co-operation with adult education providers, L.E.A. and University, and with theological colleges, are developing.

Education in the Armed Services. The army, navy and air force have each an Education Branch, in addition to the departments concerned directly

with military training. Service educational staffs prepare students both for career examinations, e.g. those required for promotion, and for G.C.E., City and Guilds and other external examinations. Service personnel may also take advantage of correspondence courses, or study for Open University degrees. The study of both languages and current affairs is encouraged. Some university departments of adult education provide residential and non-residential courses for Servicemen and women, in such fields as international relations, technology and languages, or to prepare students for Service examinations. The Services maintain their own long-term residential colleges, some of which teach for C.N.A.A. degrees.(100)

Prison Education. Every penal establishment has an Education Officer, who organises a wide-ranging programme of vocational and general education for the inmates. The vocational training instructors are on the staff of the Prison Department of the Home Office. The other teachers, mainly part-time, are employed by the L.E.A. which is in turn reimbursed by the Prison Department. Vocational training pprogrammes, preparing for City and Guilds or other recognised qualifications, and remedial education are arranged during the day. Other educational opportunities, including Open University courses, are provided on a voluntary basis in the evenings. A few W.E.A. districts and university departments of adult education also provide evening courses in prisons.(101)

Finally, any survey of an adult education system should include a brief reference to the principal auxiliary services which offer support and assistance, in greater or lesser degree, to both adult educators and students. The most important of these is the **public library** service, provided by the same local authorities which are L.E.A.s, except that in Inner London the boroughs are the library authorities, and not the I.L.E.A. The local library will often make special arrangements to secure the books needed for adult classes, drawing where necessary on regional and national systems for inter-library loans. Special collections, e.g. on local history; or files of local newspapers; or microfilms of local material from the national archives are of great value to specialised classes. Since local government reorganisation (1973), the administrative gap between the library service, now normally responsible to a Leisure Services Committee, and education has tended to widen. This development, and economic stringency, have put paid to some special arrangements e.g. the free use of library accommodation for classes based upon local collections, which existed under the former regime and which was sometimes provided for deliberately when new libraries were built. This is not, however, the fault of the librarians, who remain the most valuable allies of the adult tutor and student.

A parallel service is provided by the **Archive Departments** of local authorities, together with other repositories for historical records maintained by ecclesiastical bodies, universities or other organisations. The main limitations on their use by adult classes are their location, mainly in large towns or county administrative headquarters, and their opening hours, normally the standard office hours 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Some archive offices will open in the evenings for adult classes by special arrangement. However, the development of photocopying and microfilming has made these collections, and those of the Public Record Office and other repositories in and near London, much more accessible - at a price - to the adult students. The staffs of some archive departments themselves provide lectures and arrange exhibitions to stimulate interest in the subjects illuminated by their collections.

Britain has about 1,600 **museums**, including the national museums in London - British Museum, the Science, Geological and Natural History Museums, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and others; general museums of local interest, normally maintained by local authorities; and specialised museums: folk, maritime, transport, industrial etc. Some museums are run by voluntary organisations, trusts, or private individuals. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own national museums. The standard of presentation of local museums has risen considerably during the last twenty-five years, and gloomy show-cases of impaled butterflies have given way to attractive and informative displays on a wide range of themes. Some museums arrange guided tours and lectures. So, too, do **art galleries**, which are less numerous, but have considerable treasures in many provincial centres as well as in London and the other national capitals.

Another natural ally is the **Arts Council of Great Britain** with the associated Arts Councils for Scotland and Wales. The first secretary general of the Arts Council of Great Britain was previously the secretary of the British (now National) Institute of Adult Education, and a more recent incumbent was a former Professor of Adult Education.

The principal aims of the Arts Council are:

1. To develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts.

2. To increase the accessibility of the arts to the public throughout Great Britain.

So far, the Council has concentrated on the second aim, spending, in 1983-84, £96,000,000 on subsidies to about 1,200 clients. These include the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, which together received over £29,000,000; Opera North and Scottish and Welsh Opera, with grants of nearly £7,500,000; large numbers of provincial theatres, touring companies, orchestras and dance companies; art galleries and exhibitions; literary and art magazines; and individual artists. Over £11,000,000 were paid in grants to the twelve Regional Arts Associations, which are affiliated but autonomous bodies, active in the development of co-operation with adult education providers.

Co-operation with adult education could be enhanced if the Arts Council were able to allocate substantial funds to the pursuit of its first aim, but this would require a considerable increase in its total budget in real terms, i.e. after adjustment for inflation, which is not a realistic prospect for the near future. The Council's budget was cut after the general election of 1983, and it now faces the additional problems causes by the abolition, effective in 1986, of the Greater London Council and the six metropolitan county councils. According to the secretary-general of the Arts Council, these authorities "have a track record of the support of the arts which is second to none".

The amounts spent on educational projects and courses in 1983-84 were: Arts Council £33,700, Regional Arts Associations £24,800. A valuable survey of recent patterns of co-operation between arts providers and adult education organisations is contained in a report commissioned jointly by A.C.A.C.E., the Arts Council, the British Film Institute and the Crafts Council, and published in 1980.(102)

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Chapter V Conclusion

This book has been concerned primarily with organisation and structure. Theory and ideology have been considered briefly in relation to appropriate sectors, e.g. L.E.A. non-vocational adult education, the Universities and the W.E.A. They could not be discussed in relation to adult education as a whole, as there is little common ground on theoretical issues in a system which embraces such a variety of subjects and pursuits and such a range of student condition and motivation. The concept of such a system is itself highly artificial. The definition used in this book brings together groups which have little or no common consciousness.

This limitation extends to the classification of sub-systems. Some sectors of adult education, as defined here, are more realistically identified as sub-systems of other systems. For example, vocational adult education in a college of further education is normally regarded by its participants as part of an entity called "further education", which includes a substantial number of students aged 16-18, and would be considered - if such terminology were in common use in Britain - to be itself a sub-system of the whole public education system. The affiliation of adult education with the youth service in Scotland, or with both youth and school work in the English community college, has similar implications for the classifications of sub-systems.

This is the dilemma of the system-builder. If he confines his purview to those groups whose members are conscious, however vaguely, of belonging to an adult education movement, he gains in unity but loses disproportionately, in comprehensiveness, by excluding millions of adults who are engaged in organised educational activities.

The outstanding general characteristic of British adult education is **plurality.** The system includes

the L.E.A. sector, itself quite varied and including a large craft/recreational programme
the universities
the Open University
voluntary organisations working within the public education system, with the support of government funds and within a governmental regulatory framework
a large non-formal sector, characterised by organisations such as the Women's Institutes
industrial training under government auspices, as well as in private firms and industrial corporations
a substantial private sector
variants of all the above in England and Wales/Scotland/Northern Ireland.

It follows therefore that any attempt to select **one** organisation or sector, e.g. the W.E.A. or the Open University, as characteristic of the British system as a whole is mistaken, although it is both legitimate and useful to identify, for any particular time either past or current, the most **dynamic** elements in the system.

This book has been written as one of a series of national descriptions which, it is hoped, will both be of some value in their own right and provide the foundations for a major European comparative study. This is not the place to consider in detail the methodology of the comparative stage of the project, but reflections on the problems of comparing the British system with those of other European countries suggest the following as possible lines of approach.

The first would be to compare whole systems, to line up the indicators and see how many correspond, and to relate the overall character of one system to that of another. The second would be to take each sector or organisation or type of adult education in one country and to ask: is this activity carried on in another country, by whom, for whom and with what results? A third line of analysis, which might illuminate and clarify the second, would be to identify systems or ideas in one country according to the degree to which it would be possible to transplant them (a) to any European country or (b) to countries with a similar political tradition. The aim would be, not primarily to encourage transplantation, which is a difficult art, but to distinguish more clearly the features of an adult education system which are deeply rooted in the social fabric of the country concerned from those which have, or might have, developed in different social circumstances. As Albert Mansbridge told the first World Conference of Adult Education in 1929,

> As one nation contemplates the achievements of another it must resist the temptation to imitate, but must search out its own way ... As the East contemplates the West, inspired by what in the West it approves, it must set out to develop the treasures of the East.(1)

References Chapter V

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